BATGIRL™

YEAR ONE

THE DELUXE EDITION

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MARCOS MARTIN

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BATGIRL

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THE DELUXE EDITION

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BATGIRL: YEAR ONE DELUXE EDITION

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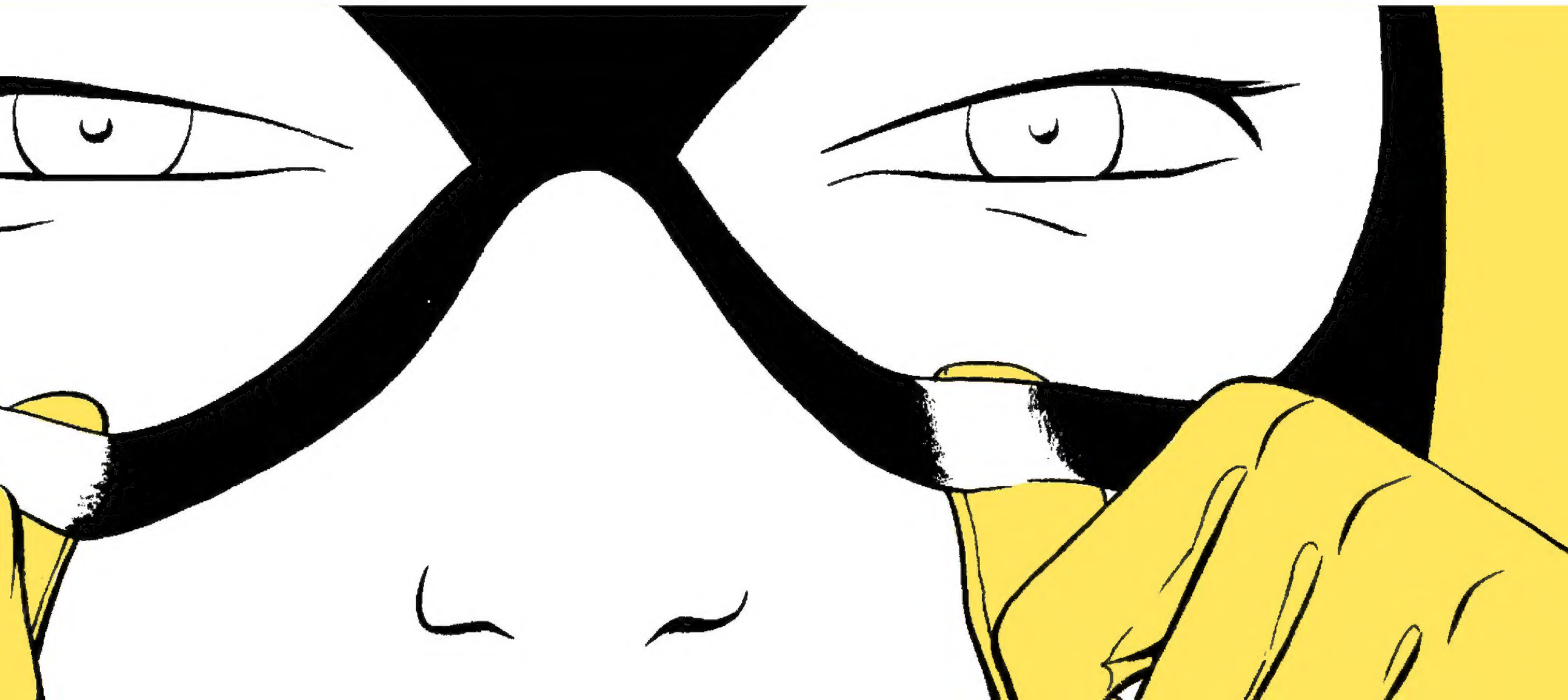

BATGIRL

MM, AL '02

Masks.

They hide our faces.

They hide our fear.

The oracle Cassandra wore a mask to hide her shame.

She knew what the future held and nobody believed her.

They thought she was a joke.

CHAPTER ONE: MASQUERADE

And when disaster struck just like she foretold...

...they blamed her.

But they still didn't heed her warnings.

Even as they washed away the ashes and blood of their ruin, they laughed at her.

HA HA HA HA HA HA!

AND WHAT'S SO *FUNNY* ABOUT THAT?

MY LITTLE GIRL--A COP?

I *RESUBMIT* THE QUESTION, DAD.

BARBARA, BE *SERIOUS*. I DIDN'T PUT YOU THROUGH COLLEGE SO YOU COULD WALK A *BEAT*.

YOU *DIDN'T* PUT ME THROUGH COLLEGE. MY *SCHOLARSHIPS* DID.

STILL...

AND WHAT'S A DETECTIVE *DO*? HE SEARCHES FOR *INFORMATION*.

MAJORING IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND DATA RETRIEVAL WOULD SEEM TO BE A *PLUS* IN THAT AREA.

A *DETECTIVE*, IS IT?

YOU DON'T EVEN MEET THE MINIMUM *HEIGHT* REQUIRE-MENTS.

THE GOTHAM GAZETTE

WORLD'S EATEST DAD

FINE!

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

YOU'RE THE DETECTIVE, YOU FIGURE IT OUT.

ONE COP IN THE FAMILY IS ENOUGH!

I WON'T LET MY DAUGHTER BECOME A COP.

DO YOU HEAR ME, BARBARA?

I hear him, all right.

Everyone in Gotham Heights can hear him.

You don't have to be Cassandra to see that Dad's on the short track to Police Commissioner.

He could make it easier for me.

Instead, he makes it impossible.

I have to find another path.

Divine my own future.

One uniquely mine.

Not a page from someone else's book.

Not a fate that begins and ends on page one...

To Dad I'm all talk about digging for information.

I won't be some glorified "Answer Lady" for the cops.

I want to be IN on the action.

Anything that will get me out of where I am.

Where I don't want to be.

MISS GORDON?

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

YES, DONALD?

Um... WOULD THE WRITINGS OF EPICTETUS GO UNDER "CLASSICAL" OR "ROMAN HISTORY"?

DONALD...

YOU KNOW THOSE BOOKS GO IN THE "PHILOSOPHY" STACKS.

STOP FINDING EXCUSES TO TALK TO ME.

IF YOU WANT TO ASK ME OUT -- THEN ASK ME OUT.

RESE
EPAR

whuh?

I... um...

I have to escape a destiny I can see scrolling out in front of me in paralyzing tedium.

I need something physical.

Something with an edge to it.

COME ON...

TRY AND TAKE ME.

I'M NOT SURE, MISTER PARSONS.

CALL ME "DRAGONCAT."

COME ON, *SHOW* THE CLASS. PROVE ME WRONG.

DOJO

WARNING!

SHOW ME YOU *BELONG* IN THIS CLASS.

'CAUSE I DON'T THINK YOU CAN CUT IT.

I...

WHAT WAS THAT? DID YOU SAY YOU'RE *WEAK*? DID YOU SAY YOU'RE *SMALL*?

I'M... I'M...

...I'M SCARED...

I KNEW IT!

SEE, CLASS? YOU HAVE TO WANT IT REALLY *BAD*!

BABSY HERE JUST SHOWED US SHE DOESN'T WANT IT *BAD*.

Dad thinks I'm too short.

My Sensei thinks I'm too "girly."

But just like the principles of Jujitsu—

—I use their expectations against them.

OW!

That will be their weakness. Not mine.

gunh!

Let them all underestimate me.

YOU'RE BREAKING MY ARM--LET ME GO--

OH, I DON'T KNOW, DRAGONCAT...

I'M NOT SURE YOU WANT IT *BAD* ENOUGH.

RAL BUREAU OF INVES GATION
GOTHAM CITY
REGIONAL OFFICE

VERY IMPRESSIVE, MISS GORDON.

BUT WHAT ARE MY *CHANCES*, AGENT BOYLE?

I UNDERSTAND I'D NEED A *LAW* DEGREE. I'VE TAKEN PRE-LAW AND--

YES, FOR SUCH A *YOUNG* WOMAN YOU HAVE AN *EXTENSIVE* ACADEMIC CAREER.

AND I KNOW I'M NOT *OLD* ENOUGH YET.

IN A FEW *YEARS* YOU'D QUALIFY FOR TRAINING.

I SEE YOUR AREA OF EXPERTISE IS *INFORMATION* GATHERING. VERY *HELPFUL* FOR AN F.B.I. AGENT.

I WANT TO DO *MORE* THAN CLERICAL WORK, SIR.

I WAS HOPING TO BE A *FIELD* AGENT.

THEN I'M AFRAID YOU ALSO HAVE SOME *GROWING* TO DO.

YOU DON'T MEET OUR MINIMUM *HEIGHT* REQUIREMENTS.

Let them think they have the upper hand over the little girl.

Let them relax while the adrenaline leaks out of their systems.

Let them believe they're closing their grips on a shrinking violet.

And when their guard is down and their pride is rising...

...let me kick their butts up around their ears.

With, or without two-inch heels—

—Batman would have ended the fight three minutes ago.

But he wouldn't be having FUN.

He also wouldn't let some crazed thug in a bug outfit get the drop on him.

Masks can blind you. Obscure your vision.

Overconfidence is a two-way street.

I never wanted to be Batman.

I made this silly getup to rankle Dad.

It's a joke at his expense.

Something I could never be, inspired by-- someone I would never want to be.

Truth to tell, when it comes to inspiration...

DEAR BLACK CAN
I NEED YOUR H

GOTHAM GAZE
JSA REUNION MARRED
BY WIZARD ATTACK!

FILE PHOTO

...1 side with fishnets over leather.

After all, HE isn't the only game in town.

Not that Dad would approve anyway.

Despite his unconventional "partnership" with an urban legend...

CAPTAIN
JAMES. W. G
MAJOR CRU

...Dad's pretty vocal about his mistrust of masks and costumes.

"Why do they always stay in the dark?" he'd say between forkfuls of dinner.

JUSTICE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

"What are they trying to hide?"

JUSTICE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

AUTHORIZED EYES
ONLY

SECURITY KEYPAD OVERRIDES

1940 Fox & Gardner Brownstone HQ

Main Entrance: 8675309
Motion Detectors: 5551213
Surveillance Cameras: 3591967

PTAIN
W. GORDON
CRIMES

HANDS HIGH, SKELL!

OFFICER... BARD, IS IT?

YOU SMELL SOMETHING BURNING, MISS GORDON?

ARE YOU PLAYING "BAD COP" TODAY?

HOW CAN I GET YOU TO CALL ME JASON, MISS GORDON?

WELL, TO START--

--YOU CAN NEGLECT MENTIONING TO THE BOSS THAT I WAS IN HIS OFFICE LEAVING HIM A SURPRISE.

DINNER AND A MOVIE MIGHT HELP, TOO...

OFFICER BARD.

Uniforms.

G.C.P.D.

Costumes.

The clothes we wear over who we really are.

Or really want to be.

SO YOU'RE SAYING IT'S POSSIBLE, MURPH?

POSSIBLE. YES.

ETHICAL. NO.

SUPER SLURP

PIZZA'S

GOTHAM UNIVERSITY

SINCE WHEN ARE *YOU* CONCERNED WITH THE ETHICS OF HACKING INTO PUBLIC COMPUTER NETWORKS?

SINCE RECEIVING A *SIZABLE* PENALTY FOR AN OVERDUE BOOK FROM THE GOTHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY.

MURPH, *FORGET* WE HAD THIS CONVERSA-TION--

--AND YOU CAN KEEP THAT DOGEARED COPY OF "LADY CHATTERLY'S LOVER."

DOWNLOADING

DONE AND DONE.

My plan is sound but the future is hazy and indistinct.

I am forced to rely on those who underestimate me...

...while I wait for a sign.

...NOW GO LIVE TO SOMMERSET'S "SLAUGHTER SWAMP" WETLANDS WHERE THE JUSTICE SOCIETY FIGHTS TO...

GOTHAM GAZETTE

GOTTA GO, DAD.

GO?

GO *WHERE?*

IT'S ELEVEN-FIFTEEN!

I'VE GOT A *LATE* MARTIAL ARTS CLASS.

AT ELEVEN-FIFTEEN?

IT'S A *24-HOUR* DOJO, DAD. THE LATEST THING.

I count all six active Justice Society members on the newscast battling Solomon Grundy.

Again.

The jog to their headquarters is less than six minutes.

Four, if I really push it.

JSA

And I do.

Dad's override code defeats the security grid.

8675309

*
0
#
7
8
9
5
6
2
3

HELLO?

I shut down the motion detectors.

I turn off the laser matrices.

I leave the cameras on.

I want to be seen.

I want to be heard.

I want my presence known.

AAH!

KRIK

UNH.

I see grappling hooks in my future.

My fate...

...which I leave in the hands of strangers...

...old gods who still believe in old tricks.

I wager my destiny on new tricks.

I believe the future can be changed.

I believe I can alter its outcome.

Unless I amend the course, the Justice Society of America will believe that G.C.P.D. Police Captain James W. Gordon entered their headquarters at 11:19 on this night.

I can't let that happen.

So I shut down the Gotham power grid on their block for three full minutes.

In theory, the JSA security system backup will kick in, relock all the doors, and scramble all the present access codes...

...wiping the slate clean.

Tabula rasa, destiny waiting to be writ.

Tomorrow, everyone will be issued new security numbers.

In theory.

But aren't theories just omens and portents of possible outcomes?

Predictions of the future?

I get rid of the evidence nevertheless.

ACME

BUT DIDN'T YOU JUST BUY A NEW COMPUTER LAST APRIL?

UPGRADE OR DIE, DAD.

SNOOZE AND YOU'RE ROADKILL ON THE INFORMATION SUPER-HIGHWAY.

ACME COMPUTERS!

COMPUTERS!

THE GOTHAM GAZETTE

CURVY CAT-BURGLER CLAWS DIAMOND CACHE

LATE DOJO. GOTTA GO. DON'T WAIT UP.

Sometimes I feel like the Barbara Dad sees is just a mask and costume over what I'm meant to be.

A cocoon over what I'm BECOMING in spite of everything.

Not so long ago Gotham was overflowing with costumes.

WAYNE AEROSPACE'S SLIPSTREAM

DEAR BLACK CANARY:

I NEED YOUR HELP!

I'VE EXHAUSTED ALL OTHER OPTIONS.

I C N'T BE A

Some have retired.

Some shouldn't even have started.

SCOTT BEATTY & CHUCK DIXON STORY
MARCOS MARTIN PENCILS
ALVARO LOPEZ INKS
JAVIER RODRIGUEZ COLORS
HEROIC AGE SEPARATIONS
WILLIE SCHUBERT LETTERS
NACHIE CASTRO ASSISTANT EDITOR
MATT IDELSON EDITOR

MM
AL '02

I CAN BE A VALUABLE ASSET TO YOUR CAUSE.
GET ME ATOP THE HASEN BUILDING THURSDAY AT MIDNIGHT.
YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED.
—AN APPRENTICE-IN-WAITING

They call them Mystery Men.

Women, too... but never as many.

YOU THE VALUABLE ASSET?

UM... YES.

Heroes and Villains.

SPEAK UP, GIRLIE!

All wearing masks to hide their identities...

WHADDYA WANT WITH THE CANARY, KID?

AND WHAT'S WITH THE MASK?

...or conceal their fear.

YOU... YOU WEAR ONE.

YEAH, WELL... I AIN'T GOT A PRETTY MUG LIKE YOU, GREEN-EYES.

YOU WANNA EXPLAIN WHY YOU WENT TO SO MUCH TROUBLE TO DELIVER THIS LITTLE FAN LETTER?

LEAVING IT WITH YOU WAS EASIER THAN BREAKING INTO A SATELLITE IN GEOSYNCHRONOUS ORBIT 22,300 MILES UP.

I WAS HOPING YOU'D... UM... FORWARD IT.

THE SOCIETY AIN'T A MESSENGER SERVICE, GREEN-EYES.

CANARY'S GOT ANOTHER ENGAGEMENT--

--AND I'M PRETTY SURE SHE AIN'T IN THE MARKET FOR APPRENTICES.

THIS LIFE AIN'T FOR YOU, GREEN-EYES.

EVERYBODY *HATES* YA. YOU GOT NO LIFE OF YER OWN. AND YA COULD END UP ARTHRITIC AND *CRIPPLED.*

AIN'T THAT *RIGHT,* DOC?

THE FATE OF HEROES IS BALANCED IN TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY, WILDCAT.

AND HERE I THOUGHT *CORRIGAN* WAS THE GLOOMY GUS IN OUR GANG.

SO WHADDYA SEE FOR GREEN-*EYES,* DOC?

I SEE TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY.

YEAH, WELL... I COULDA TOLD YA THAT.

"MAYBE SHE'LL DECIDE TO GET HER KICKS OUTTA BOOKS OR SUMPTHIN' LESS DANGEROUS."

They treat me like I'm a stupid girl.

Some delusional little girl.

And I believe it too. I see what they see as providence.

For a while.

CHAPTER TWO: F.U.T.U.R.E.-TE.N.S.E.

NO DATES, BABS?

NAW.

LATE-NIGHT KARATE?

UNH-UH.

YOUR NEW COMPUTER?

S'FINE.

IT'S A BEE-OO-TIFUL DAY IN CROCKY'S SWAMP!

Maybe it's depression.

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

Maybe it's resignation.

UH... ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID LAST WEEK...

Or maybe it's something else.

Something deeper.

THE BATMAN
MYTH OR REALITY?
"HE WAS STANDING AS CLOSE TO ME AS YOU ARE," SAYS ROBBERY VICTIM.
And I'm not finding much help changing my mood.
You can't get away from all the masks and costumes and capes.
GAZETTE THE BATMAN
Who gave them the right to turn me away?
What credentials do they have?
ARE YOU GETTIN' THAT OR JUST LOOKIN'?
EXCUSE ME?
THIS AIN'T A LIBRARY, SIS. YOU GETTIN' THAT?
IT APPEARS THAT I'M JUST LOOKING.
AND I DOUBT YOU'VE EVER SEEN THE INSIDE OF A LIBRARY.
Where do they go to vigilante school?
GAZETTE THE BATMAN

BARBARA, I'M *WORRIED* ABOUT YOU.

ME?

EXCEPT FOR GOING TO WORK, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN OUT OF THE HOUSE FOR *WEEKS.*

SO?

LIKE YOU *DO?*

YOU HAVE NO *SOCIAL* LIFE.

I'M A *COP.*

BUTTER

OH, THAT'S *RIGHT.*

AND I'M *NOT* A COP.

DON'T START THAT AGAIN.

WHAT'S *THIS?*

AN INVITATION TO A *PARTY.*

DINNER. DANCING. *BOYS.*

JAM

AT LEAST *THINK* ABOUT IT.

OKAY, DAD.

Bearer is entitled to attend
THE GOTHAM CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT'S
MASQUERADE BALL
at the
Bristol Country Club's Seneca Lodge
To benefit the
G.C.P.D. Million Dollar
Memorial Fund
Costume and mask required for admission

IT'S VERY POPULAR WITH ALL THOSE STORIES IN THE PAPER.
I'M NOT SURE.
INFANTINO'S
COSTUMES
FOR ALL OCCASIONS
OPE

IS THAT WHAT THE BATMAN IS SUPPOSED TO LOOK LIKE?
MASKS
PARTY
WHO KNOWS?
RIGHT. WHO KNOWS.

I GOT SUPERMAN.
NO THANKS.
WONDER WOMAN?
PLEASE.

Is this how they do it?
Masked vigilantes.
One stitch at a time until the costume makes you into your future?

WELL, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

HUH?

THE SULTAN OR THE COWBOY?

THEY'RE BOTH GREAT.

THE SULTAN ISN'T TOO SILLY? COPS CAN BE *RELENTLESS*, YOU KNOW.

IT'S FUN, DAD.

YOU'RE MAKING YOUR OWN COSTUME?

YES...

CAN I *SEE*?

NOT UNTIL IT'S *FINISHED*!

LET IT BE A *SURPRISE*, THEN.

YEP.

A *BIG* SURPRISE.

The Million Dollar Masquerade is a big event in the City.

They'll stop holding it after this.

Dancing 'til dawn with a Gotham twist.

One of the reasons involves the kind of thing that will happen tonight.

But the evening will start out well.

G.C.P.D. MILLION DOLLAR MASQUERADE

I'll be caught up in the glamor.

I'll almost forget the reason I'm here.

I can't find Dad in the crowd at first.

Everyone is here.

Politicians, celebrities, and billionaire wastoids like Bruce Wayne...

...who will become the life of the party in ways he can't possibly forecast.

I finally find Dad and I'm ready to spring my surprise.

How will he react?

Will he be angry with me for dressing up as his "secret" pal?

Will he see how wrong it is to underestimate me?

To preordain me into mediocrity? Hopeless. Futureless.

That's what I'll hope for anyway.

But I won't get the chance.

THAT'S SOME COSTUME!

uh?

AND YOU DO SO MUCH FOR IT.

HI. J. DEVLIN DAVENPORT. AND YOU ARE...

NOT INTERESTED, TIGER.

The party will take a bad turn.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! YOUR ATTENTION!

ANOTHER GREAT OUTFIT! HA!

I AM KILLER MOTH, AND I'M NOT HERE TO HURT ANYONE--

--AS LONG AS YOU DO WHAT I SAY.

ALL I WANT IS MISTER BRUCE WAYNE... AND ME AND MY FRIENDS ARE GONE.

HOLD STILL. THIS'LL ONLY STING A LITTLE.

There will be a kidnapping.

The culprit will be a bug who is both crazy and stupid.

THAT BUGMAN'S A SCREAM!

There will be a hundred off-duty cops there, most half-drunk and no help at all.

But one of them will be my father, a teetotaler who rarely takes his holster off.

Nobody will take the Moth seriously.

They won't understand that he's dangerous and fresh from a bloody escape out of Blackgate.

SHUT UP!

NOBODY LAUGHS AT KILLER MOTH!

THAT'S ENOUGH, WALKER!

LAY DOWN THE GUNS.

Slowly the mood will shift.

The crowd will realize this isn't entertainment.

I won't be able to get through in time.

GOOD NIGHT, COP.

PAF

Things will move fast from there.

RUN, MISTER WAYNE!

WHO ARE--?

JUST RUN, STUPID!

The future is only the beginning...

"...of another journal chronicling the adventures of the Knight and Squire in my care.

While the Master maintains the ruse that is "Bruce Wayne" at a Gotham Police function, I mind the Manor.

Master Richard has only just returned from an emprise with his fellow "Teen Titans."

KLIK NEWMAN!

KLIK D'OH!

KLIK SHA-ZAAAM!

These youthful wards of costumed crime-fighters band together to thwart evil and the perils of their own pubescence, no doubt.

KLIK ...HAS TURNED THIS ANNUAL CHARITY EVENT INTO A *HOSTAGE* CRISIS.

woo.

A *HANDFUL* OF OFF-DUTY G.C.P.D. OFFICERS TRY THEIR BEST TO CORDON OFF THE BRISTOL COUNTRY CLUB, WHERE PERIODIC GUNFIRE..."

Over time I have convinced myself to accept the rightness of Master Richard's inclusion in the vocation.

"...EYEWITNESSES CLAIM THAT MASKED GUNMEN ARE NOW IN PURSUIT OF A YOUNG COSTUMED WOMAN IN ATTENDANCE..."

Though I am loath to proffer any such blessings for more potentially reckless youth determined to be "heroes."

Be they stripling speedsters, amphibious avengers...

...or callow lasses dedicating their lives to vendetta.

Things will go well enough.

unnh!

At the beginning.

But the element of surprise will wear off.

And I will be improvising—

YOU'RE *DEAD*, CHICKY.

IT'S THE KILLING JAR FOR YOU!

—or faking it. Take your pick.

The sides will be easy enough to distinguish.

One, a psycho disturbed enough to dress like a giant insect.

The other a foolish girl disturbed enough to dress like a giant bat.

What right do I have to be there?

What do I think I'm going to do?

GCC NEWS

POLICE

What do I know about hostage situations?

ALFRED!

PICK UP, ALFRED.

SIR?

ARE YOU WATCHING THE NEWS?

INDEED I AM, MASTER BRUCE--

EARLIER

--AND I FIND IT MOST *DISTRESSING.*

ZONY

"I FEAR THAT WE MAY REQUIRE A BIGGER CAVE."

AGHK!

I'll have to get in close... too close for him to use his wacky gun.

Without it he'll just be another goof in a silly mask.

YOU'RE COCOONED, BABE!

Like me.

OW!

He'll see that his future is futile.

And then he'll give up.

guh... guh... guh...

Or he won't.

STUPID MASK!

Maybe he'll give it the good fight.

YOU PICKED THE WRONG COSTUME, GIRL.

Maybe he'll get the last word.

I'M NOT FOOLING AROUND ANYMORE.

THE MOTH IS CHANGING, DO YOU HEAR?

Or maybe he'll just flitter away.

SKREE

THE MOTH IS CHANGING!

I will not let that happen.

Dressed as a bat, a silly joke upon my father...

...I will also take flight.

There will be blood.

Like the liquid thundering in my ears.

WHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPW

There will be ashes.

But I can change the outcome.

COME ON. COME ON.

JUST LIKE WE PRACTICED.

WHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUP

I can become something more.

WHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUP

Something higher.

From out of the shell I once was...

WHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUP

...I'll emerge better.

WHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUP

I'll be lifted up with new wings.

WHUP

WHU

WHU

Like a moth.

Or a bat.

But like a blind bat...

I won't even see this coming.

I'll see him going, laughing at me like all the rest.

I THINK HE WENT *THIS* WAY!

And then I'll run and hide.

Just like some scared little girl afraid of the dark.

AND WHAT ARE *YOU* SUPPOSED TO BE?

SCOTT BEATTY &
CHUCK DIXON STORY
MARCOS MARTIN PENCILS
ALVARO LOPEZ INKS
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MATT IDELSON EDITOR

I ASKED YOU A QUESTION.

WHAT ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO BE?

I'M... I'M...

I'm what, exactly?

I CAN HANDLE HER, BATMAN.

SHE'S JUST A GIRL.

ROBIN, NO.

REALLY?

Little twerp in short pants thinks I'm a walkover.

He's got a LOT to learn.

Despite my best predictions, I didn't mean for tonight to turn out like it did.

But I'm not going to let these two push me around.

HEY!

WHAT AM *I*? WHAT ARE *YOU* GUYS?

YOU SHOW ME *YOUR* LICENSE TO WEAR MASKS AND ACT TOUGH.

CHAPTER THREE: AFTERGLOW

All I wanted was to give Daddy a few bad moments.

To prove my value. My potential.

UH!

Now I'm walking on somebody's cape.

THIS IS NO GAME. YOU HAVE NO *RIGHT* TO WEAR THAT SYMBOL.

AND YOU DO?

I GET TO KILL BATMAN, ROBIN, AND BATGIRL ALL IN THE SAME NIGHT!

LA LUNA

MY REP IS *MADE*, BOYS! *MADE!*

THIS JUST GETS BETTER AND *BETTER!*

And so it became official.

Now I am "Batgirl"... forevermore.

And I can already see that I'll never be comfortable with the name.

I'd have preferred "Batwoman."

COPS'RE COMIN', KILLER MOTH.

DAMN! GET US OUT OF HERE!

Too late to change it now.

My present just caught up with the future.

WHO WAS SHE? IS SHE ALL RIGHT?

THE GIRL DISAPPEARED. BUT WE'LL BE SEEING HER AGAIN.

I HOPE SO.

"I hope so"?

The Boy Wonder has a crush on me?

Ew.

At least he's grown a few inches.

Hi.

Umm Hi... I GUESS.

My ever-vigilant and overprotective father doesn't talk about that night.

Dad isn't proud that he has to consort with Bogeymen in order to police his big bad city.

NOT ON YOUR LIFE, BOY WONDER.

We don't say the B-word in the Gordon House.

That voice though.

Like wind growling over gravestones.

That can't be natural.

As far as Captain James Gordon will be concerned, mopey daughter Barbara bailed on the Policeman's Masquerade.

Her alibi will read thus...

"Unwilling to fend off the awkward advances of drunken tycoons and philandering cops, Barbara Gordon remained safely at home the night in question.

"Barbara likened the potential Masquerade Ball experience to sticking herself with red-hot needles!

"Having turned in early, Barbara slept comfortably in the security of her own home...

Or some-thing.

HOLD ON!

NOK NOK NOK

"...until she was rudely awakened by an officer of Gotham's Finest."

CENTRAL, THIS IS BARD. SOMEBODY BETTER TELL THE CAPTAIN THAT HIS DAUGHTER'S NO--

--Whoa.

Uh... NEGATIVE ON THAT, CENTRAL. PLEASE INFORM HIM THAT MS. GORDON IS SAFE AND SOUND.

PROBLEM, OFFICER BARD?

ONLY THAT YOU STILL DON'T CALL ME JASON, BABS.

I DON'T CALL YOU AT ALL.

AND THAT'S THE PROBLEM.

MY FATHER, HE'S--?

JUST FINE. WORKING ON ROUNDING UP THAT KILLER MOTH NUTBALL.

IT TAKES BRAINS TO TRY KNOCKING OVER A WIDOWS AND ORPHANS CHARITY EVENT ATTENDED BY OFF-DUTY COPS.

HE COULD EVEN BE HIDING ON THIS BLOCK.

LISTEN, BABS, IF YOU'RE SCARED I COULD COME IN FOR A CUP OF COFFEE UNTIL THE CAPT--

SLAM!

Scared?

Far from it, Officer Bard.

In fact, I'm pretty exhilarated.

I could do this ALL night.

Must be all the Bat Endorphins pumping.

Heh. Good one...

SNRZZ...

BARBARA, WAKE UP.

WHU--?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I KNOW IT'S SATURDAY, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO SLEEP THE DAY AWAY.

I DIDN'T FEEL WELL LAST NIGHT. I TOOK SOME COLD MEDICINE AND CRASHED.

UMm... SORRY I SKIPPED THE MASQUER-ADE.

YOU MISSED QUITE A SHINDIG.

Y-YEAH? HOW SO?

KILLER MOTH KAYOED ME AND TRIED TO MAKE OFF WITH BRUCE WAYNE AS A HOSTAGE.

SOME GIRL IN A SCARY COSTUME SAVED THE DAY... OR SO I'M TOLD. I WAS UNCONSCIOUS DURING THE GOOD PARTS.

REALLY? YOU'RE OKAY, RIGHT? DAD?

I SEE THAT OLD TRELLIS IS HOLDING UP WELL ENOUGH.

GLAD I NAILED IT DOWN TIGHT BACK WHEN YOU IGNORED YOUR MIDNIGHT CURFEW.

LAST THING I NEEDED WAS MY DAUGHTER RISKING HER NECK TO PUT A BURR IN THE OLD MAN'S BREECHES.

Is that a hint, Dad?

...GAZETTE

SATURDAY, NOV. 16

KNOCKOUT!

COSTUMED CRIMEFIGHTER FOILS KIDNAPPING

MOTHMAN AT-LAR...

Or are you still gathering evidence?

"YOU GOT FIVE MINUTES, BUGFACE."

DON'T WASTE 'EM.

I WAS HOPING FOR SOMETHING MORE PRIVATE, TONY.

YOU SAID WE HAD BUSINESS. THIS IS WHERE I DO BUSINESS.

AND IT'S MISTER BRESSI TO YOU, BUGFACE.

YOU HAVE QUITE THE SETUP HERE, MISTER BRESSI.

LOTS OF GOODS, VOLUME, HIGH PROFIT MARGINS.

BUT IT'S A HOUSE BUILT ON SAND.

YOU CAN PAY OFF THE *COPS*, SURE.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THIS NEW CROWD OF DO-GOODERS? THESE VIGILANTES AND *SUPER*HEROES? WHO'S GOING TO COVER FOR YOU *THERE*?

YOU.

RIGHT. KILLER MOTH.

AND HOW'S THAT *WORK*?

WITH *THIS*. A MOTH LANTERN.

I SHINE THIS LANTERN AND *YOU* SEE IT?

ME OR ONE OF MY *PEOPLE*.

YOU'RE OFFERING *ME* PROTECTION? I *AM* PROTECTION.

THOSE MASKED CRUMBS COME AROUND AND YOU SHINE THIS INTO THE SKY. *I* SHOW WITH ALL THE FIREPOWER YOU NEED.

AND EVERY *COP* FROM BRISTOL TO BLÜDHAVEN.

I SAW YOU ON TEE-VEE, BUGFACE. SOME *CHIPPIE* BEAT YOU SILLY.

YOU'LL *NEED* ME, SOMEDAY!

I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES.

VINCE. JACKIE.

oop!

AN' TAKE YOUR NIGHT-LIGHT WITH YA.

EXIT

HAHA!

HAHA!

HAHAHA

SKISH!

YOU WILL BE SORRY.

YOU'LL ALL BE SORRY.

I'LL SHOW YOU THAT YOU NEED KILLER MOTH.

SOMEHOW.

WE'RE HERE.

LOOK, I GAVE UP THE SMOKES.

IF I HAVE A HEART ATTACK NOW, IT'LL BE ON *YOUR* COWL.

ANY LEADS ON KILLER MOTH?

YOU AND I NEED SOME SORT OF *HOTLINE*. THIS WAITING UNTIL DARK BUSINESS IS SILLY.

I BET YOU WERE EXPECTING *THREE* OF US TONIGHT, RIGHT, CAPTAIN?

NO, LAD.

I'M STILL GETTING USED TO JUST THE *TWO* OF YOU.

FRANKLY, ROBIN, I WISH YOU WERE *HOME* SOMEWHERE DOING YOUR HOMEWORK AND DREAMING ABOUT PRETTY GIRLS.

IS THAT WHY YOU CALLED US HERE, JIM...

TO SEND A MESSAGE?

THE USUAL SNITCHES HAVEN'T SPOTTED THE MOTH.

I'M HOPING YOU GENTLEMEN MIGHT NET HIM BEFORE HE ACTUALLY *HURTS* SOMEONE.

WE'LL SEE TO IT.

AND JIM--

--I HAVE *NOTHING* TO DO WITH THE GIRL.

"SHE HAS HER OWN AGENDA."

SALE

50% OFF

I didn't see the third guy.

He must be the wheelman.

50% OFF

$5.99 ONLY

TIME

POP STARS

Should have seen him. Dumb, Barbara. Dumb.

Still time to correct my mistake. Revision on the fly.

Good thing I've been in here before.

TIME

MASKED TROUBLE?

Beef stew. Tomato soup. Kidney beans. That's the stuff.

Time this right and it's "Score one for Batgirl."

A second off and it's "Shop-keepers and Weird Girl Found Slain."

Clean-up in Aisle Three.

That was way too close.

I should have cased the place at least as well as the hoods did.

Way too close.

...And way too public.

--SAVED OUR LIVES!

SHE TOOK THOSE GUYS DOWN! BAM!

AND SO YOU HAVE IT, ANOTHER TALE OF VIOLENT VIGILANTISM ADDED TO THE MASKED MYTHOLOGY OF GOTHAM AFTER DARK.

THIS TIME WITNESSES CLAIM TO HAVE SEEN A *FEMALE* CRIMEFIGHTER.

MASS HYSTERIA OR SOME MISGUIDED AND DISTURBED CITIZEN?

YOU BE THE JUDGE.

THIS IS ROY RAYMOND JUNIOR FOR *CRIMEBEAT*.

DAMMIT!

IT'S THAT *BATGIRL!*

ONE BAT-BUM WASN'T ENOUGH! *NOW* THERE'S TWO! *PLUS* THE BRAT!

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO PROVE I CAN PROVIDE PROTECTION TO THIS TOWN'S UNDER-WORLD WHEN THE DAMN BATS KEEP *MULTIPLYING?*

I MEAN, WHAT CAN GO WRONG *NEXT?*

BEER

CHINA WORLD

NOK NOK!

AT THIS HOUR?

YES, WHAT IS IT?

YOU CAMERON Van CLEER?

THAT'S ME, WHAT DO YOU WANT?

WE WANT MISTER BRESSI'S MONEY.

YOU'RE IN HOCK TO TOUGH TONY FOR FIVE HUNDRED LARGE.

NO...

AND DON'T BOTHER REACHIN' FOR THE CHECKBOOK, MISTER Van CLEER.

WE GOT ENOUGH OF YOUR KITED CHECKS TO WALLPAPER A HOUSE.

THIS IS STRICTLY A DEMONSTRA-TION.

unnh!

uh!

uh!

PONY UP, RICHBOY, OR WE'LL BE BACK.

USED-TO-BE-RICHBOY, Y'MEAN.

FIRST THAT PANTYWAIST KILLER BUG AND NOW THIS GUY.

LIKE HAVIN' THE NIGHT OFF, VINCE.

HA!

I COULD HAVE HAD THE MONEY... BEEN CLEAR OF DEBT... IF NOT FOR...

...THAT GIRL... THAT DAMN GIRL...

...and her damn fool ideas.

INSURMOUNTABLE CLIMBING GEAR

The cost of this flight of fancy alone will no doubt bankrupt Barbara Gordon, Underpaid Librarian and Potential Defaulter of Student Loans.

I bet Batman's rich.

How else could a crime-fighter afford all this stuff.?

J. JOHNSON'S ARMY SURPLUS

BEST-D-FENS

God bless policeman's discount.

GCPD

PEPPER SPRAY

THE GOT

LLOW RAY

GAZE

I'll have to hold off on the mini-laser and two-way wrist radio receiver.

Some items might be well worth a little overtime pay, though.

What the Hell am I getting myself into?

WAYNE TOWER

THE BUILDING CLOSES IN TWENTY MINUTES, MISS.

MORE THAN I NEED.

ROOFTOP

DING!

I can do this.

GOGGLES DOWN. WE'RE NOT VOYEURS.

BETCHA MY TRUST FUND SHE DOESN'T GO THROUGH WITH IT.

If I can do this, then I'll be right up here with them.

Not just slugging it out with muggers and low-lifes knocking over bodegas and liquor stores.

How hard can it be really?

SERIOUSLY, I'LL EVEN TOSS IN MY STOCK OPTIONS.

THIS IS WHERE SHE THROWS IN THE TOWEL AND GIVES UP THE COSTUME FOR GOOD.

YOU LOST THAT WAGER BEFORE SHE EVEN ENTERED WAYNE TOWER.

SHE'S ALREADY MAKING THE LEAP.

IT'S THE *FALL* THAT'LL KILL HER.

HOLY...

SCOTT BEATTY &
CHUCK DIXON STORY
MARCOS MARTIN PENCILS
ALVARO LOPEZ INKS
JAVIER RODRIGUEZ COLORS
HEROIC AGE SEPARATIONS
WILLIE SCHUBERT LETTERS
NATCHIE CASTRO ASSISTANT EDITOR
MATT IDELSON EDITOR

IN GOD WE TRUST

LIBERTY

1947

MM
AL '02

This may be the dumbest thing I've ever done.

Grand Avenue rushes up to meet me.

I'm breathless.

I'm terrified.

I'm happier than I've ever been.

For a few seconds.

It's two-ton test line.

No way it broke with my measly one-ten pounds.

Someone cut it.

Not that it's going to make any difference when I hit the sidewalk.

I'm seeing pretty clearly that I should have bought a bungee.

UNNH!

I HAVE YOU!

UFF!

WOO.

WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?

DID YOU SEE WHO CUT MY LINE?

UH-- BATMAN CUT IT--

HANG ON, I'M--

BATMAN?

WUMH!

Is this some kind of test?

Big Bad Bat cuts my line and then saves me.

I'm in the grip of gravity again.

Now I can hear the horns of taxis on the street.

That was all so pointless.

What am I doing here?

OOP!

I TOLD YOU BEFORE I DON'T NEED *YOUR* PERMISSION TO DO THIS.

WHAT'S THE IDEA OF THE *NEAR DEATH* EXPERIENCE?

YOU WERE AT TERMINAL VELOCITY.

THAT JUMPLINE YOU WERE USING HAS NO *GIVE*.

IT WOULD HAVE SLICED YOUR FINGERS OFF OR PULLED YOUR ARMS FROM THEIR SOCKETS.

BATGIRL DOESN'T KNOW THAT. SHE'S *NEW* AT THIS.

DON'T CALL HER THAT.

Is he strict.

YES...

THANKS FOR TRYING TO SAVE MY LIFE, ANYWAY.

DON'T EVER CALL HER THAT AGAIN.

WHY DON'T *YOU* GO EASY ON THE...

FSSSSSS

-AS I FEARED. YOUR LITTLE SECRET SOCIETY IS GROWING...

An English accent?

WILL THE YOUNG LADY BE STAYING FOR DINNER?

NO.

That's The Bat.

THEN I SHALL RETURN TO MY DUTIES... *ELSEWHERE.*

Batman and Robin... and Jeeves?

YOU THINK IT WAS OKAY BRINGING HER HERE?

That's the kid.

Here? Where here?

YES.

Someplace BIG. Lots of echoes.

I JUST HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT.

WELCOME TO OUR LAIR.

I was right. Batman is rich.

And possibly a little crazy.

CHAPTER FOUR:

CAVE DWELLERS

Talk about taking a theme too far.

WOW... YOU REALLY DON'T MESS AROUND.

THIS IS SERIOUS FOR YOU.

WHO ARE YOU?

JEEZ LOUISE, IS THAT A CRAY MAIN-FRAME?

I SAID--

--WHO ARE YOU?

WHO AM I!?!

WHO ARE YOU?!

AND WHAT IS THIS PLACE? SOME RETRO BOMB SHELTER?

WHERE THE HECK DID YOU *BRING* ME?

HEY!

OW!

IF YOU TRY ANYTHING, I SWEAR I'LL SCREAM.

WATCH HER.

GOING BACK OUT?

THIS CITY DOESN'T PROTECT *ITSELF.*

MAKE SURE SHE DOESN'T TOUCH *ANYTHING.*

LOOKS LIKE YOU AND I GET TO HOLD THE FORT, *BATGIRL.*

HELP YOU UP?

I CAN DO IT *MYSELF..*

AND I'LL TELL YOU LIKE I TOLD *HIM*, PIXIE BOOTS...

IF YOU *TRY* ANYTHING I'LL SCREAM.

WHEN WILL YOUR BOSS BE BACK?

HE'S NOT MY BOSS. I'M HIS *PARTNER*. AND IT COULD BE A COUPLE HOURS... MAYBE MORE.

PATROLS SOMETIMES GO ALL THE WAY UNTIL SUNUP.

YOUR HERBAL TEA AND THE LINIMENT YOU REQUESTED FOR YOUR STRAINED SHOULDER.

CATCHING UP ON ALL THE PRIMETIME TELEVISION YOU FORFEIT DURING THESE NOCTURNAL TRAIPSINGS?

SO WHO'S THE BRITISH GUY?

NOBODY YOU NEED TO KNOW.

OH... I SEE.

WE CAN NOW ADD *VOYEURISM* TO THE ROSTER OF PERSONAL PSYCHOSES YOU REFUSE TO ADDRESS.

NOT NOW, ALFRED.

I WILL ADMIT *MY* COMPLICITY IN YOUNG MASTER RICHARD'S INVOLVEMENT IN THIS BIT OF FAMILY ENTERPRISE...

BUT I WILL NOT CONDONE NOR REMAIN SILENT WHILE YOU ENGAGE IN OPEN RECRUITMENT AND *ENABLE* OTHER YOUNG VIGILANTES.

AND JUST WHAT *DO* YOU CALL THIS MORALITY PLAY UNFOLDING BENEATH US?

IT'S A CLASSIC.

GOOD COP. BAD COP.

AND I TRUST THAT MASTER RICHARD IS THE 'GOOD COP'?

WHY ELSE DO YOU THINK HE WEARS THE BRIGHT COLORS?

Hydrogen-fueled power generator.

Oh-kay.

AND IT'S ALL ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY, TOO.

THE BIG BIRD DEFINITELY SOARS, BUT I KINDA PREFER THE WHIRLY-BATS.

NOW THAT'S FLYING BY THE SEAT OF YOUR PANTS.

This place is outfitted for war.

A war on crime.

SERIOUSLY. FANGS.

I'm just stalking muggers and two-bit holdup guys.

These guys are hunting the REAL monsters.

Every genus and species Gotham City has to offer.

LLBANCZ

AKA: MATT HAGEN

AKA: MARK

Alphabetized, identified, and cross-referenced according to penchant, predilection, or power.

This single library of larceny shames just about every other law-enforcement database on the planet.

THIS CLOWN'S NO JOKE.

IF YOU SEE *HIM*, RUN THE OTHER WAY.

Who are these guys?

CLEAR CROSSING

...LIKE A SHOOTING GALLERY EXCEPT WITH RUBBER ROUNDS AND PAINT PELLETS TO SIMULATE HITS.

OCCASIONALLY, STUN-GUN DARTS, TOO... BUT THOSE ARE HARDER TO DODGE.

IF I COULD TRUST YOU TO BE GOOD, YOU MIGHT TRY IT OUT.

CLEAR CROSSING

MAYBE SHOW ME IF YOU'VE *REALLY* GOT THE STUFF TO DO WHAT WE DO.

I MAY *SURPRISE* YOU, PIXIE BOOTS.

OKAY THEN... BUT THIS IS JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME, OKAY?

IF THE BIG GUY KNEW I WAS DOING THIS, HE'D HAVE MY HASH.

ORDERS ARE ORDERS.

CLEAR CROSSING

CLEAR CROSSING

WE HAVE *RULES* DOWN HERE.

DISABLE FAIL-SAFE

NOW WHAT?

WOW.

Nothing like the pistol range at the Police Academy.

This is more akin to a Hollywood sound stage.

What kind of money did they sink into this?

MEN AT WORK

Is it more about cash than courage?

I think the special effects are convincing at first.

VOOP VOOP VOOP VOOP

Until I realize the bullets are real.

A live-fire exercise?

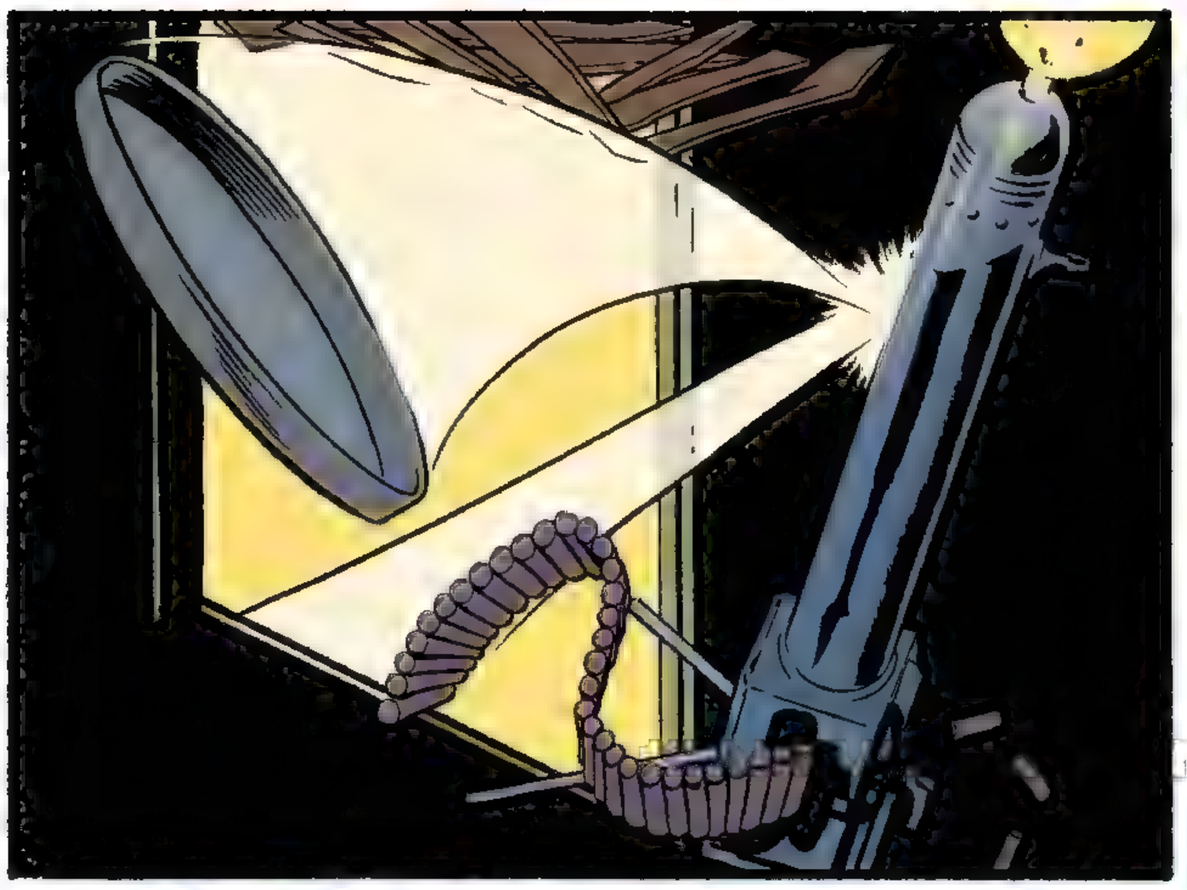
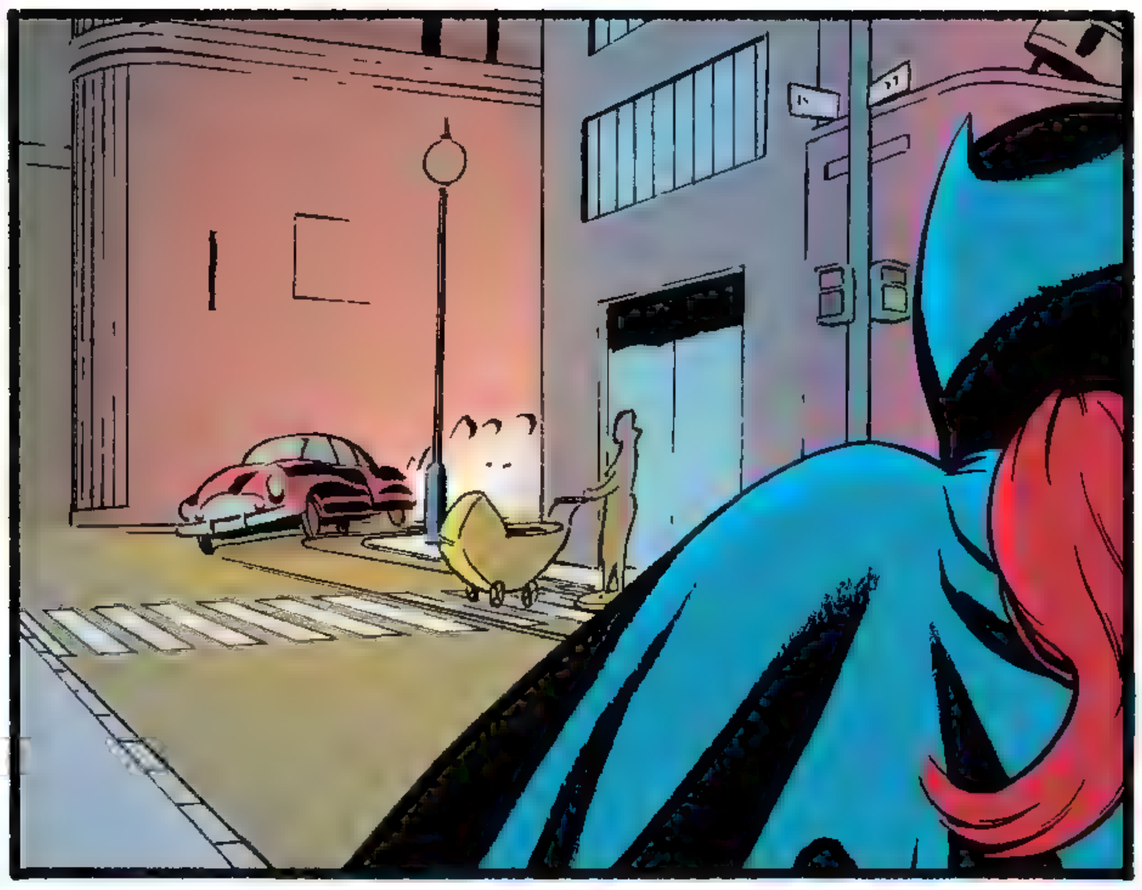
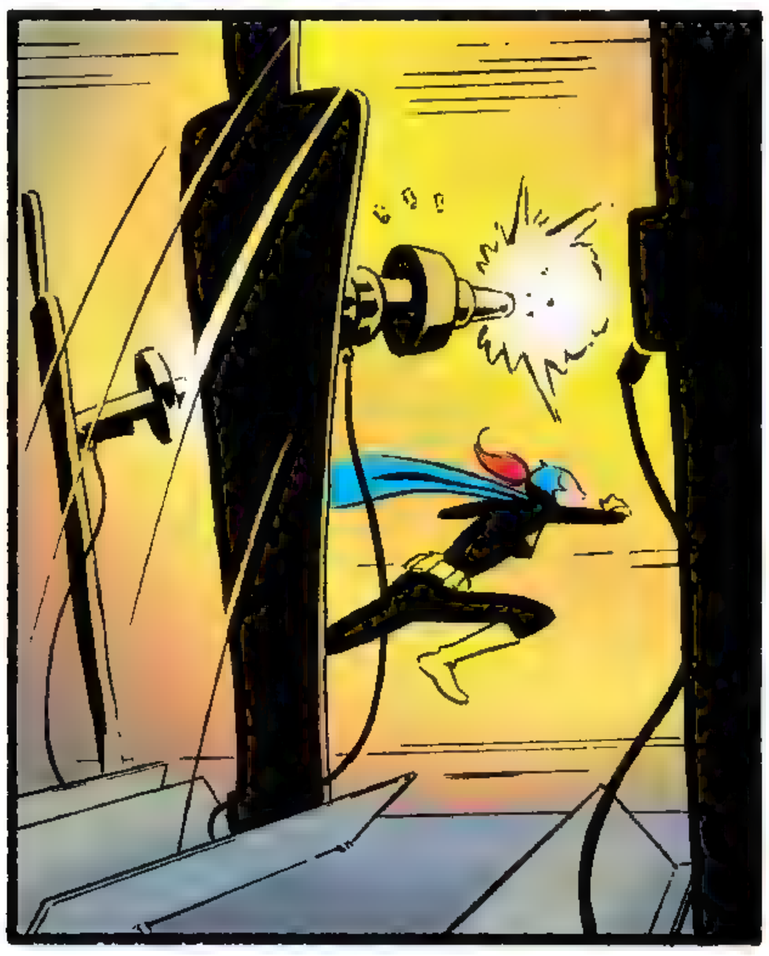
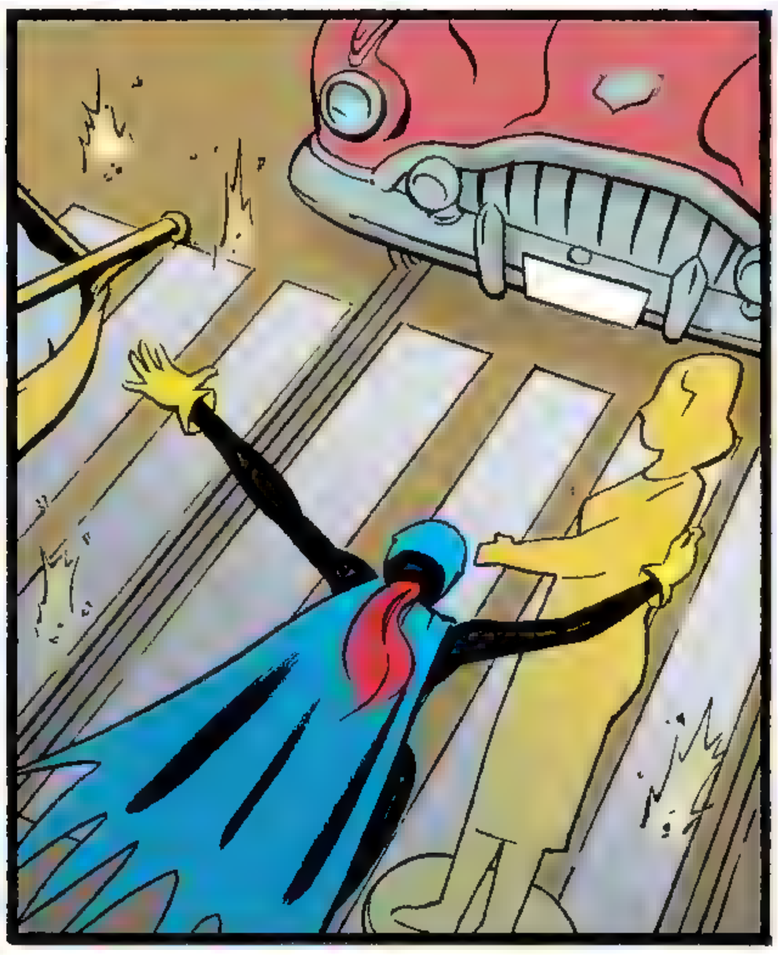
How crazy are these guys?

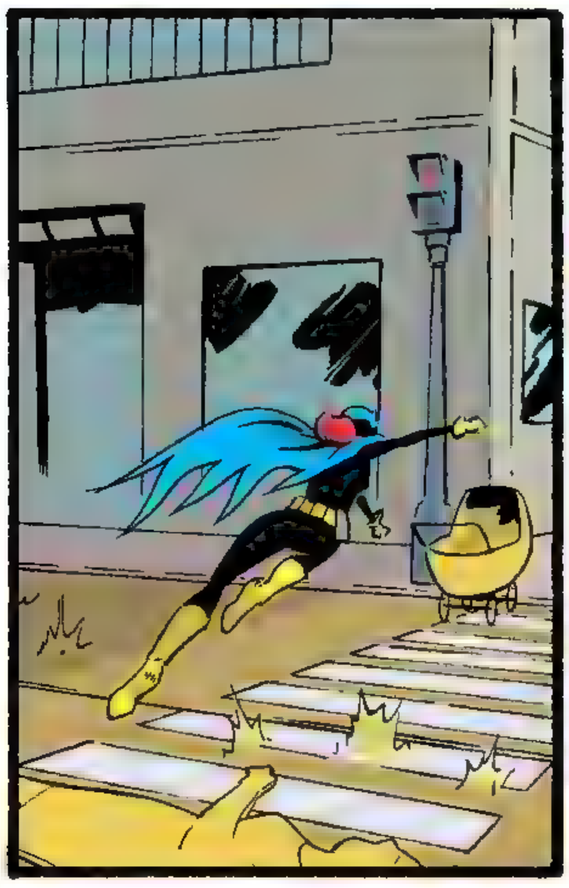
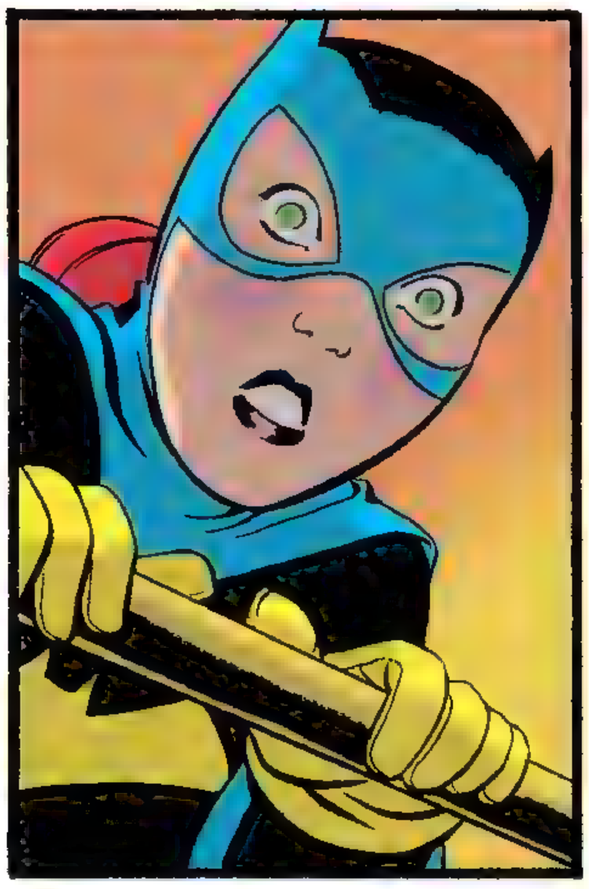
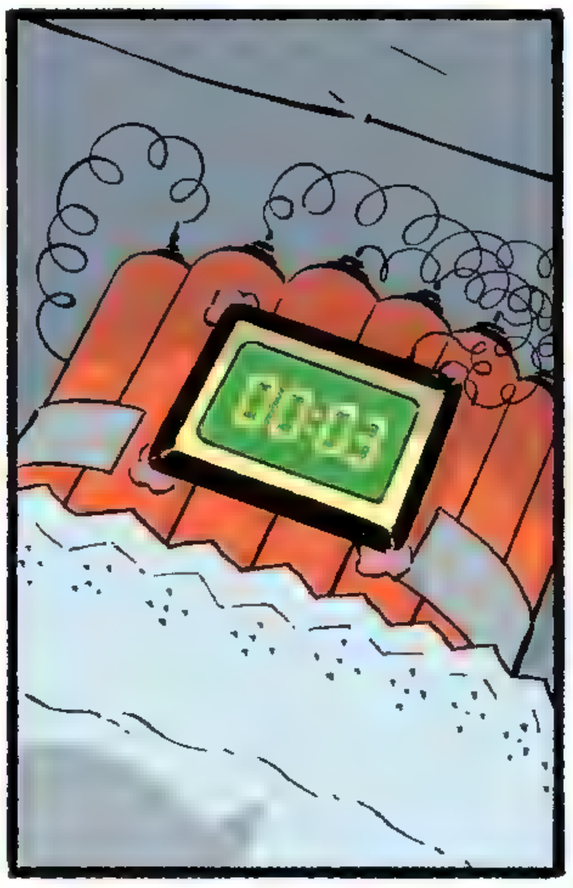
Pretty damn crazy.

Imagine tossing an unarmed woman into this role-playing deathtrap.

But I'm not just any woman.

I'm Jim Gordon's little girl.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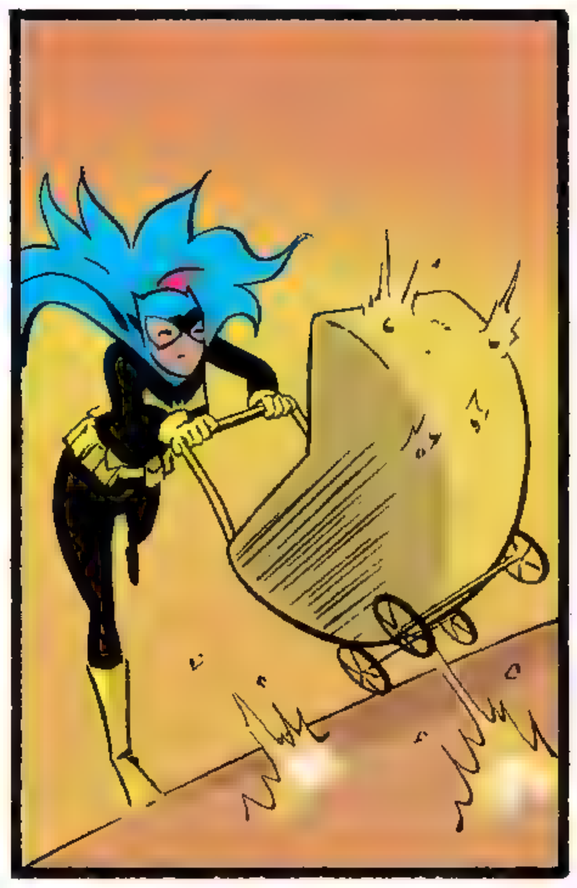

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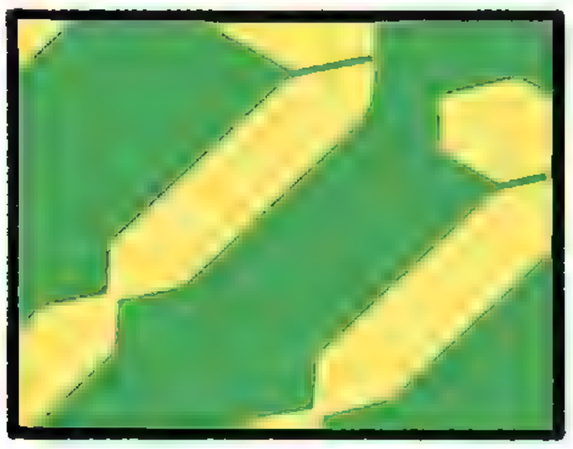
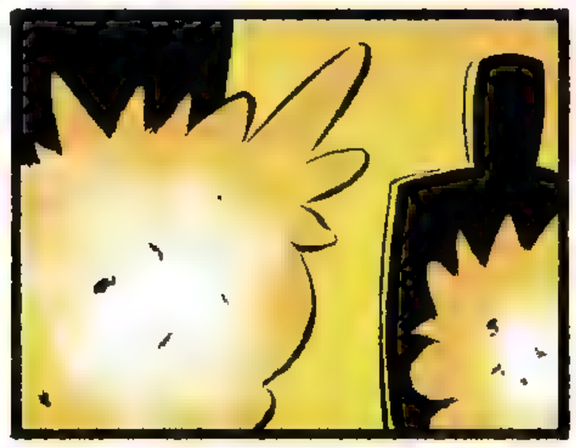
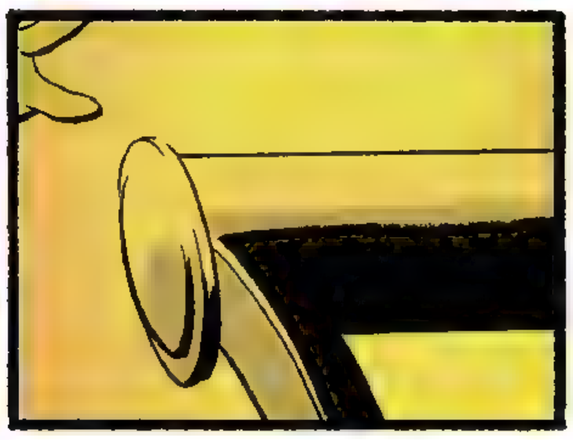




CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

VERY NICE. I THINK YOU GET YOUR *DIPLOMA.*

REALLY?

oooff?

WELL, HOW'S MY *POST-GRADUATE* WORK?

umph!

I WOULDN'T GRADE YOU AS *HIGH* AS MY PARTNER.

YEAH? WELL, I HAVE A FEW WORDS FOR *YOU,* TOO.

I DON'T THINK YOU PASSED.

I--unnh-- SURVIVED, DIDN'T I?

THAT'S NOT ENOUGH.

YOU USED LETHAL FORCE AGAINST YOUR LAST OPPONENTS.

WE DON'T DO THAT.

WE DON'T KILL EVEN TO DEFEND OURSELVES.

WAS I SUPPOSED TO LET--uh--YOUR PAPERDOLLS SHOOT ME?

WHAT WOULD THAT HAVE PROVED?

ONLY THAT YOU COULD BE ONE OF US.

IT WASN'T A FAIR TEST.

ow.

SHE DIDN'T HAVE ANY OF THE GEAR WE USE.

I DON'T NEED ALL THESE *TOYS*--

--YOUR WEIRD GIANT PENNY-ARCADE SHOOTING GALLERIES AND ALL THE REST.

I'M STRONG ENOUGH... *inh*... AND... *unf*... SMART ENOUGH FOR *ANYTHING* YOU THROW AT ME.

THEN ANSWER ONE QUESTION.

WHY?

WELL, I... I...

I THOUGHT SO.

THIS ISN'T A *GAME*.

TIME TO GO HOME, LITTLE GIRL.

IS THAT IT?

I FAIL THE *FINAL* BECAUSE I CAN'T TELL YOU IN FIFTY WORDS OR LESS WHY I WANT TO DO THIS?

YOU MAY HAVE ALL THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE--

--BUT YOU DON'T HAVE A MONOPOLY ON WANTING TO *HELP.*

I'LL TELL YOU *WHY,* YOU BIG SCARY GOON...

BECAUSE I CAN.

I CAN SEE GOTHAM'S *FUTURE.*

AND WITHOUT PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND PIXIE BOOTS AND ME, THIS PLACE DOESN'T HAVE *MUCH* TO LOOK FORWARD TO.

SO GO AHEAD AND GAS ME WITH YOUR HANDY KNOCKOUT SPRAY.

I'LL STILL FEEL THE SAME WAY WHEN I--

--WAKE?

FSSSTTTT

CURIOUS HOW THE ROLE OF "BAD COP" IS SO EASILY CEDED TO THE *UNDERSTUDY.*

...LOCK HER IN, LAD...

WE DON'T WANT SOME ERRANT VAGABOND STUMBLING UPON THE YOUNG MISS BEFORE SHE ROUSES FULLY.

WHERE...

...am I?

Oh, no. No, no, no.

They know.

They know where I live.

They know who I am.

WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE... *FEH!*

THE OBVIOUS SOMETIMES ELUDES EVEN *HIM*, LAD.

AND YOU SAY YOU KNEW IT FROM THE START?

YEAH. THE RED HAIR, THAT CUTE LITTLE BURST OF FRECKLES ACROSS THE BRIDGE OF HER NOSE...

COWL OR NO COWL--

"--I'D RECOGNIZE CAPTAIN GORDON'S DAUGHTER ANYWHERE."

GOTHAM EXPRESS

DING DONG! DING DONG!

MORE COMPUTER STUFF?

UH... LOOKS LIKE IT... YEAH.

MUST BE MY...UM... MEMORY UPGRADE.

Y'KNOW... RAM, ROM, BITS, AND BYTES.

That's it, Babsy. Baffle the antiquated Chief of Detectives with techno-jargon.

He'll no doubt dismiss your blushing also.

Yup. No way he'll even begin to surmise that his prim and proper daughter spent the better part of last night in the company of dark strangers in some batcave.

WORLD'S EATEST DAD

That's right, Dad.

MISS BARBARA GORDON
359 MURPHY AVENUE
GOTHAM CITY
00062

Just assume that your little Librarian is just ordering hopelessly boring geek items through the mail.

Hardware. Software. Test-prep materials...

BATGIRL,

YOU LOOK LIKE A FAST STUDY.
THIS'LL HELP YOU CRAM.
TRUST ME.
HE'LL COME AROUND.

(R)

P.S. PIXIE BOOTS ARE OPTIONAL.

Everything I need for the make-up exam.

SCOTT BEATTY &
CHUCK DIXON STORY
MARCOS MARTIN PENCILS
ALVARO LOPEZ INKS
JAVIER RODRIGUEZ COLORS
HEROIC AGE SEPARATIONS
WILLIE SCHUBERT LETTERS
NACHIE CASTRO ASSISTANT EDITOR
MATT IDELSON EDITOR

MM'
AL '02

This guy slays me.

"I *HATE* THEM ALL.

"I REALLY *DO*.

"I MEAN, WHAT MAKES *THEM* SO SPECIAL?

"THEY CAN'T *FLY* OR SEE THROUGH *WALLS* OR TURN *INVISIBLE.*

"THEY PUT THEIR *BOOTS* ON ONE AT A TIME.

"I WEAR A *MASK,* JUST LIKE THEM.

"BUT THEY ALWAYS MANAGE TO MAKE ME LOOK *STUPID.*"

The ridiculous costume...the bug gimmickry...it's about as idiotic as dressing up like a flying rodent.

But that's the key, right? I have to think like THE BAT. Be the insectivore and use my radar to home in on THE MOTH.

So here's the profile: Cameron Van Cleer, white male, early to middle 30s, and independently wealthy, given how much these masked boys love their high-tech toys. When he's not in Blackgate, I figure him to hang with a more enlightened crowd befitting his station in life...

WHY'S A BAT SO MUCH COOLER THAN A *MOTH?*

uh huh.

THEY'RE THE REASON I GET NO RESPECT.

THEY REALLY *GET* TO YOU, *huh?*

SURE. I *THOUGHT* UP THIS SWEET RACKET AND THEY...

WHAT *KIND* OF RACKET? WHAT'S THE *ANGLE?*

THE BAT WATCHES *OVER* STRAIGHT CITIZENS. HE DOES WHAT *COPS CAN'T* DO.

WHAT ABOUT THE *CROOKS?* WHO DO *THEY* TURN TO IN ORDER TO GET THE JOB DONE FOR THEM?

YOU.

DAMN *STRAIGHT.*

KILLER MOTH. PROTECTOR OF THE *NOT-SO-*INNOCENT.

I HAVE *ALL* THE COOL STUFF.

A *HIDEOUT.*

THE MOTH-*MOBILE.*

THE *MOTHCOPTER.*

A *MOTHMOBILE.*

AND ALL I WANTED WAS A LITTLE *TEENSY* PIECE OF THE ACTION.

A *PROTECTION* RACKET FOR HOODS?

WHY NOT?

STRAIGHTS' *TAXES* PAY THE COPS. *THAT'S* PROTECTION.

SURE.

NOW IT'S *ALL* DOWN THE TUBES.

MY COOL STUFF.

MY *GANG.*

We've already established that he employs an Armani army, loyal goons in expensive suits and matching moth-motif sunglasses. He must feel pretty smug with them fluttering all around him and hanging on his every word.

IT'S THOSE KIDS. THAT'S WHAT'S DIFFERENT.

HE'S GOT SIDEKICKS.

MAYBE IF I GOT A COUPLE OF PUNK KIDS. PICKED 'EM UP OFF THE STREET AND TAUGHT THEM WHAT I KNOW.

MOTHBOY OR LEPIDOPTERA LAD, OR...

BRAINSTORM! A BRAINSTORM!

I CAN RAISE 'EM TOUGH. THEY'LL KICK THOSE SNOT-NOSED BRATS INTO NEXT WEEK!

STILL PLENTY OF WORK FOR YOU GUYS.

I MEAN, KIDS WORK CHEAP, RIGHT?

IT'S TIME I LET YOU GUYS SEE MY HIDEOUT.

LET'S GO TO THE COCOON AND GET BUSY!

I HAVE LOTS OF IDEAS.

SOON AS THE OUTFITS START PAYING UP WE'LL GET US A MOTHVET. MAYBE A MOTHBOAT.

U-RENT

WHY NOT JUST PULL A SCORE, CAM?

THAT'S FOR CHUMPS. LET THEM DO THE HEAVY LIFTING.

WAIT'LL YOU SEE THE COCOON, I PUT A LOT OF CASH INTO THAT PLACE.

TAKE A RIGHT OFF THE BRIDGE ONTO CANAL NORTH.

THE SHOT IS SET UP. WHERE'S LYNNS?

HAVEN'T SEEN HIM, BOSS.

WELL, FIND HIM!

WE'RE OVER BUDGET NOW!

OKAY!

LYNNS?

GARFIELD?

UM... WE NEED YOU ON THE SET.

TOBEY IS FREAKIN' AND...

TELL HIM I'LL BE THERE.

WOO.

LYNNS-FX. LTD.

THAT DUDE IS INTENSE.

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

BUSY.

BUSY MAKING MY SPECIAL EFFECTS MORE SPECIAL?

YEAH.

YOU KNOW WHAT I *WANT*. WE PICK UP RIGHT AFTER TRACY'S CAR HAS CRASHED INTO THE DRUMS.

SURE.

I DO A SLOW ROLL-UP ON TRACY--

--WHILE NUMBER *TWO* PICKS UP THE MOBSTERS.

GOT IT.

EVERYONE TO *PLACES!*

WE'RE WASTING *MOON-LIGHT!*

I *CHECKED* THE WIRING. WE'RE ALL *SET*, GAR.

GOOD.

BUT YOU GOTTA *LOT* OF JELLY OUT THERE. YOU SURE THE BLAST--

WHEN I NEED A GUY FRESH OUT OF FILM SCHOOL TO TELL ME MY BUSINESS I'LL RETIRE, OKAY?

SURE, GAR. JUST *ASKING.*

READY TO *ROLL!*

STARS ON THEIR MARKS AND EVERYONE ELSE *OFF!*

PICK ON A POOR, DEFENSELESS *WOMAN*, WILLYA?

SHE'S THE ONLY *WITNESS* TO US OFFIN' JIMMY CEE!

CAP HER!

OH!

WHA--

SHE'S BURNING!
CALL AN AMBULANCE!
MY GOD!
I TOLD YOU IT WAS TOO MUCH FUEL, GAR!
THIS IS HORRIBLE--
-:SOB:
--HORRIBLE!

I HAVE A COMPUTER AND A FAX MACHINE AND A SHOOTING RANGE.

ALL *STATE* OF THE ART.

YOU GUYS'RE GONNA *LOVE* THIS.

FROM THERE WE'RE GONNA *RUN* GOTHAM.

AND YOU GUYS ARE ON THE GROUND--

RENT

--FLOOR?

PROPERTY SEIZED
FOR UNPAID TAXES
ENTRY BY UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS UNLAWFUL

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT GOTHAM COUNTY
#569318-008

FORECLOSURE?

PROPERTY SEIZED
FOR UNPAID TAXES
ENTRY BY UNAUTHORIZED
PERSONS UNLAWFUL

WHERE YOU GUYS GOING?

THIS IS A MISTAKE!

WE SCRAPE SOME CASH TOGETHER AND I PAY THE BACK TAXES.

WE CAN DO IT TONIGHT.

GUYS!

HOLD ON! I CAN'T WALK HOME LIKE THIS!

sigh.

NO GANG.

NO RIDE.

NO FUTURE.

I can imagine him right now basking in his cozy secret headquarters, plotting his next crime on some mega-gigabyte Moth-puter. No underground bunkers for this guy, though.

Moths like warmth, right? Or is it that they just like to flit around in the spotlight?

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO *DO?*

WE HAD TWO MORE *WEEKS* OF SHOOTING WITH TRACY.

WHEN CAN SHE COME *BACK?*

SHE'S GOT BURNS OVER 80% OF HER BODY.

SHE'S *NEVER* GONNA BE BACK.

WE *CAN* THE PROJECT. WE *HAVE* A COMPLETION POLICY.

POOR TRACY.

THIS WAS GONNA BE HER *BREAKTHROUGH* PICTURE.

...LYNNS...

LYNNS!

YEAH?

WHAT THE *HELL* WERE YOU THINKING?!

WHERE DID IT SAY *BLOW UP* THE LEAD?!?

IT SAYS "SPECTACULAR EXPLOSION."

SPECTACULAR? *YES!* DEADLY? *NO!*

YOUR ASSISTANT TELLS ME HE *WARNED* YOU THERE WAS TOO MUCH INCENDIARIES.

YOU GOT IT ALL ON FILM?

FOUR CAMERAS. BUT IT'S ALL *USELESS.*

SO, WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO WITH THE *FOOTAGE?*

MY GOD...

YOU *WANT* IT!

GET OUT!

GET OUT, YOU SICK GHOUL!

YOU'RE *RUINED* IN THIS BUSINESS, LYNNS!

FINISHED!

G.C.F.D.

"The Moth is changing."

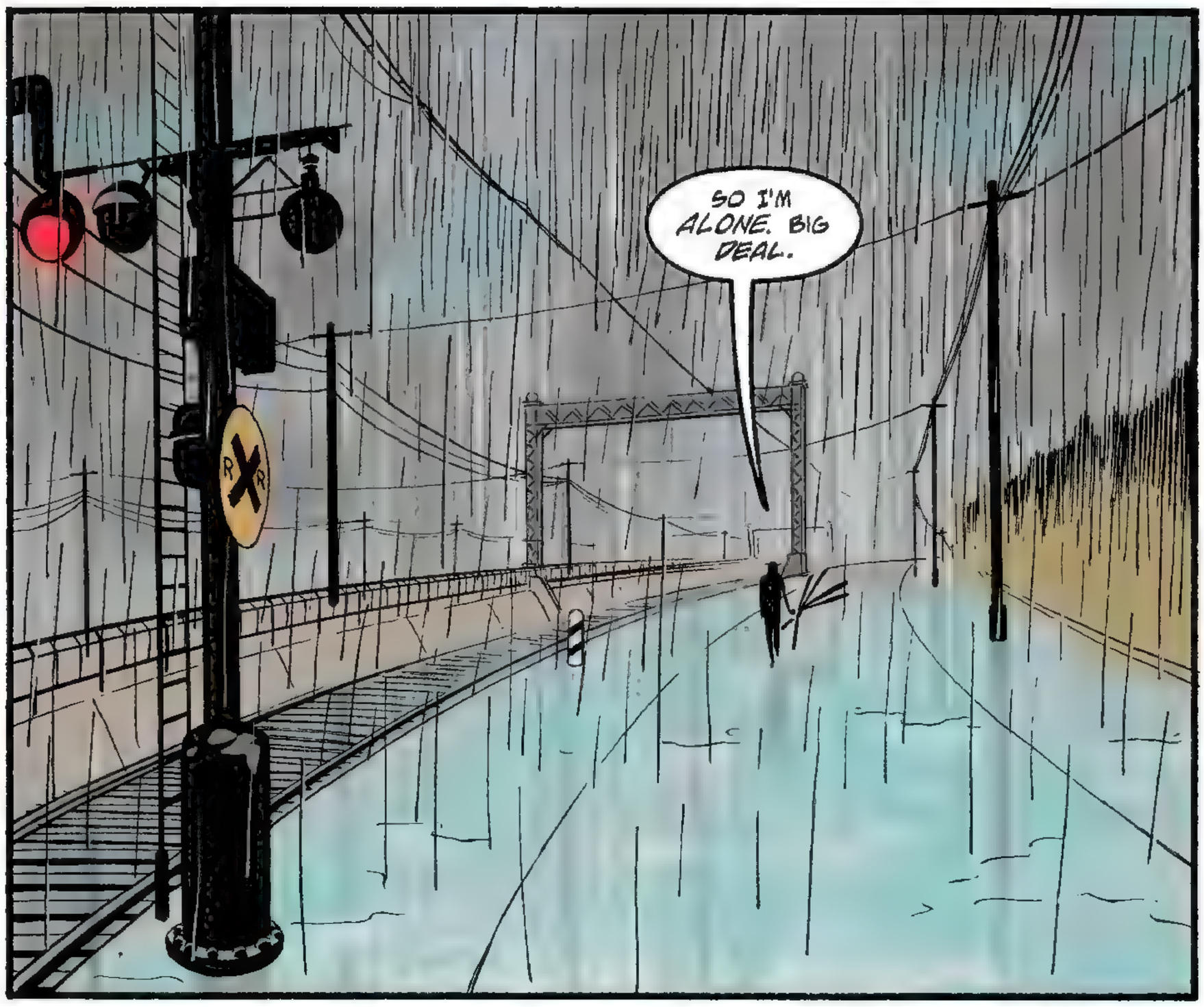
That's the last thing he said to me—that is, before he jumped through a plate-glass window and later tried to machine-gun me and THE BOYS from his helicopter.

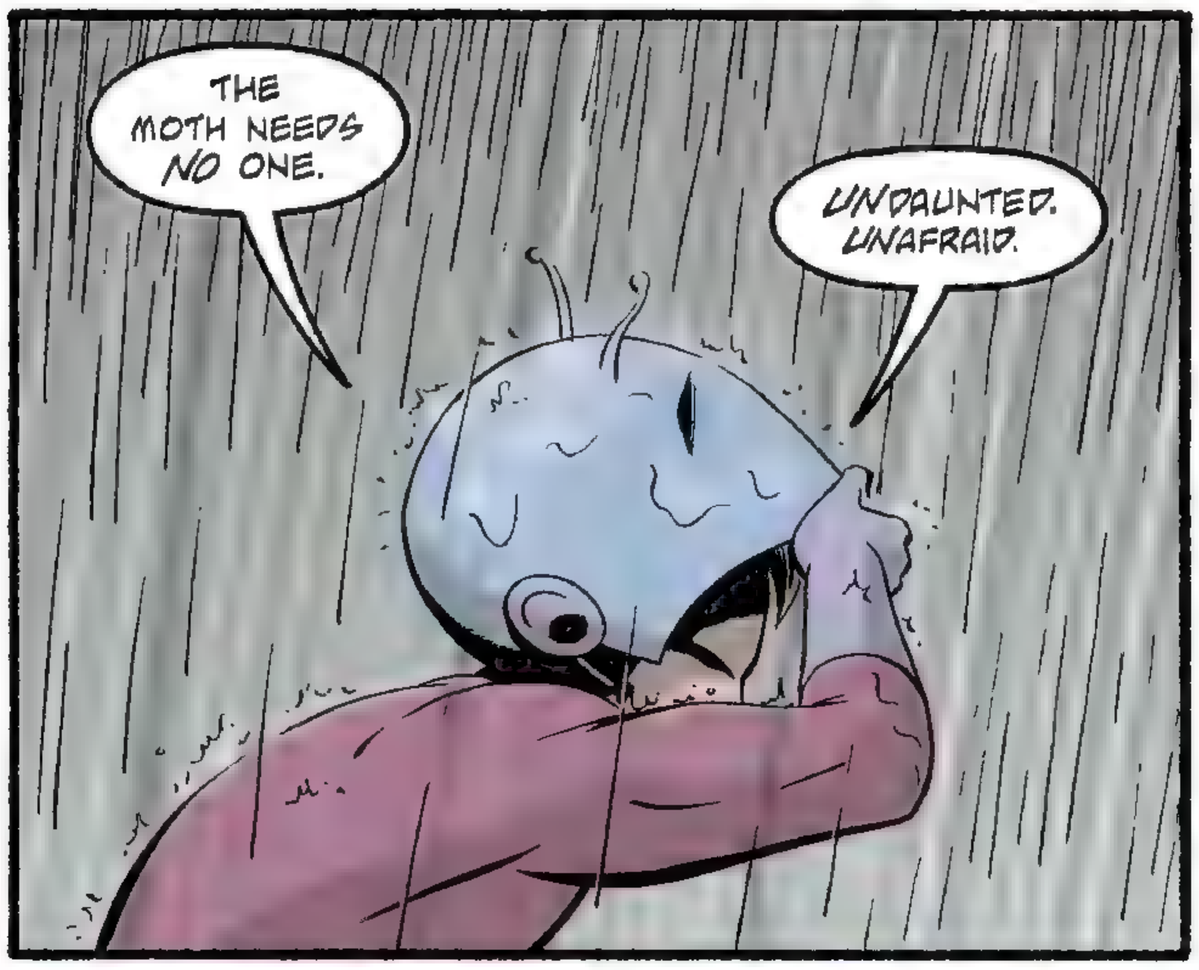
Moths metamorphose from caterpillars. Get your wings and it's the end of the line.

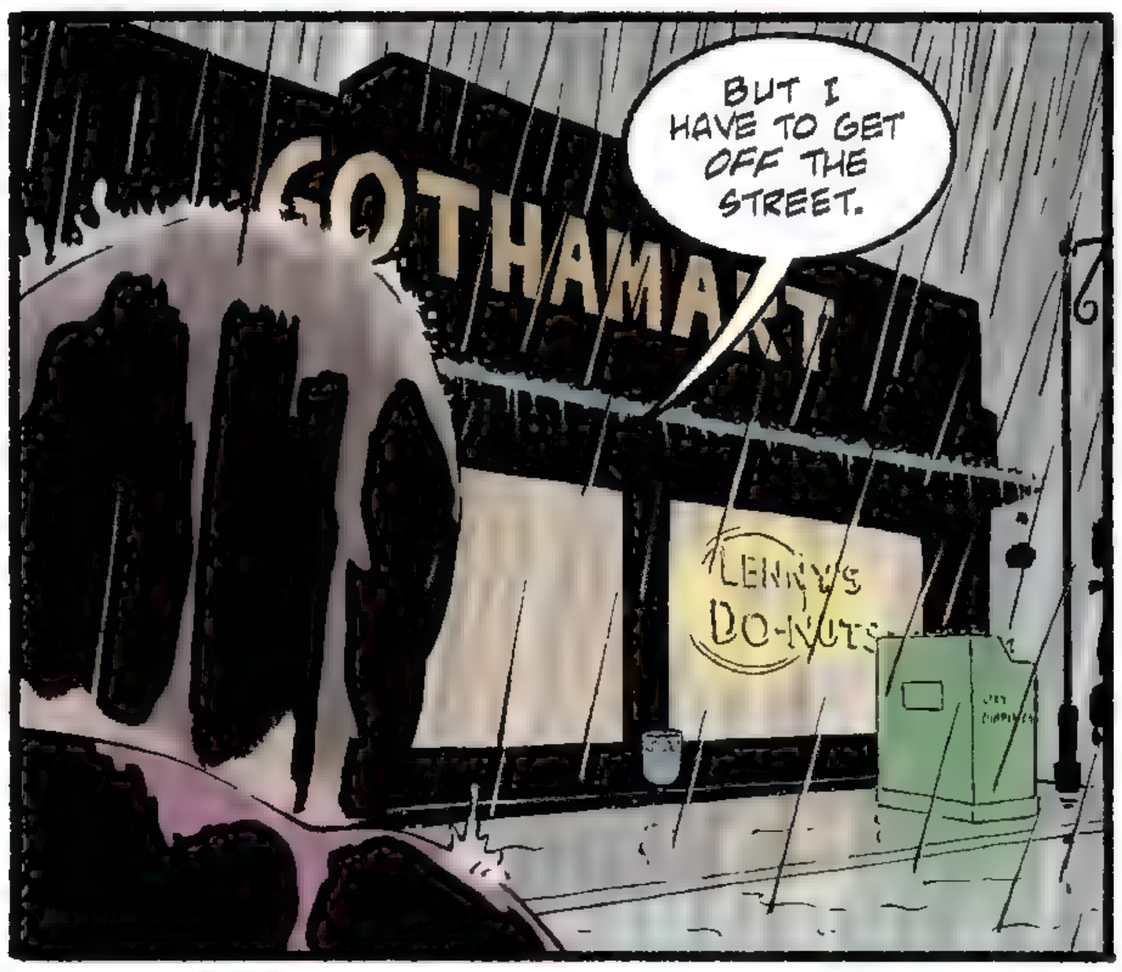
So where does the Killer Moth go from here?

What does HE metamorphose into?

What do you do when you're just no good at kidnapping billionaires or being a supervillian-for-rent?







IT'S TIME FOR A *CHANGE* IN MY *MODUS OPERANDI*.

I WANTED TO BE A *HERO* TO THE GOTHAM MOBS.

HOW *STUPID* AM I? I WANT TO WORK FOR THE GANGS LIKE AN *ERRAND* BOY?

THAT'S WHY THEY DON'T RESPECT ME.

UH-HUH.

THEY DON'T SEE ME AS AN *EQUAL*.

I'LL SHOW THEM.

THEN I'LL SHOW BATMAN AND ROBIN AND THAT SMIRKING BATGIRL.

DID YOU SAY...

BATGIRL?

My ears are burning. Someone must be talking about me.

Maybe it's HIM. Maybe he loses sleep over the Million Dollar Masquerade and how a little girl in a black leather cowl pinned the Moth's wings.

Unlikely, I'm afraid. In this town, it's all about the BatMAN.

Ladies can all exit stage left. Jerk.

"BUT FIRST I NEED CASH."

The Stripping Post

TONY BRESSI!!!

...WE HAVE SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

I THOUGHT I THREW YOU OUT ON YOUR BUTT.

EXIT

I NEED THIS? SOME FREAK STALKING ME EVERYWHERE I GO?

I OFFERED YOU A DEAL. I ASKED YOU FOR A CUT.

NOW I'M TAKING A CUT.

YOU'RE TAKING?

YOU GOT GUTS, BUTTERFLY. I'LL HAND YOU THAT.

HA HA HAHAHAHAHAHA!

I GOT GUTS, ALL RIGHT.

AND A PARTNER.

THERE'S A NEW BUG IN TOWN.

HE'S FIREFLY.

KILL THE MUSIC.

YO!

EXIT

NO!

TOO MUCH!

EXIT

EXIT

TOO MUCH...

JUST SUPPOSED TO SCARE THEM.

TRUST ME.

THEY'RE SCARED.

TONY'LL NEVER PAY US NOW.

HE'LL KILL US! I WANT OUT!

WHAT HAPPENED TO "PARTNERS"?

WE STICK WITH THE PLAN, CAMERON.

PLAN?

WE'RE GONNA TAKE DOWN THE BATS.

ALL OF THE BATS.

THAT'S HOW WE MAKE OUR REP.

THAT'S HOW WE MAKE WISEGUYS LIKE TOUGH TONY PAY UP.

I GOT NOTHING TO LOSE, CAMERON.

"THERE'S NO TURNING *BACK* FOR ME."

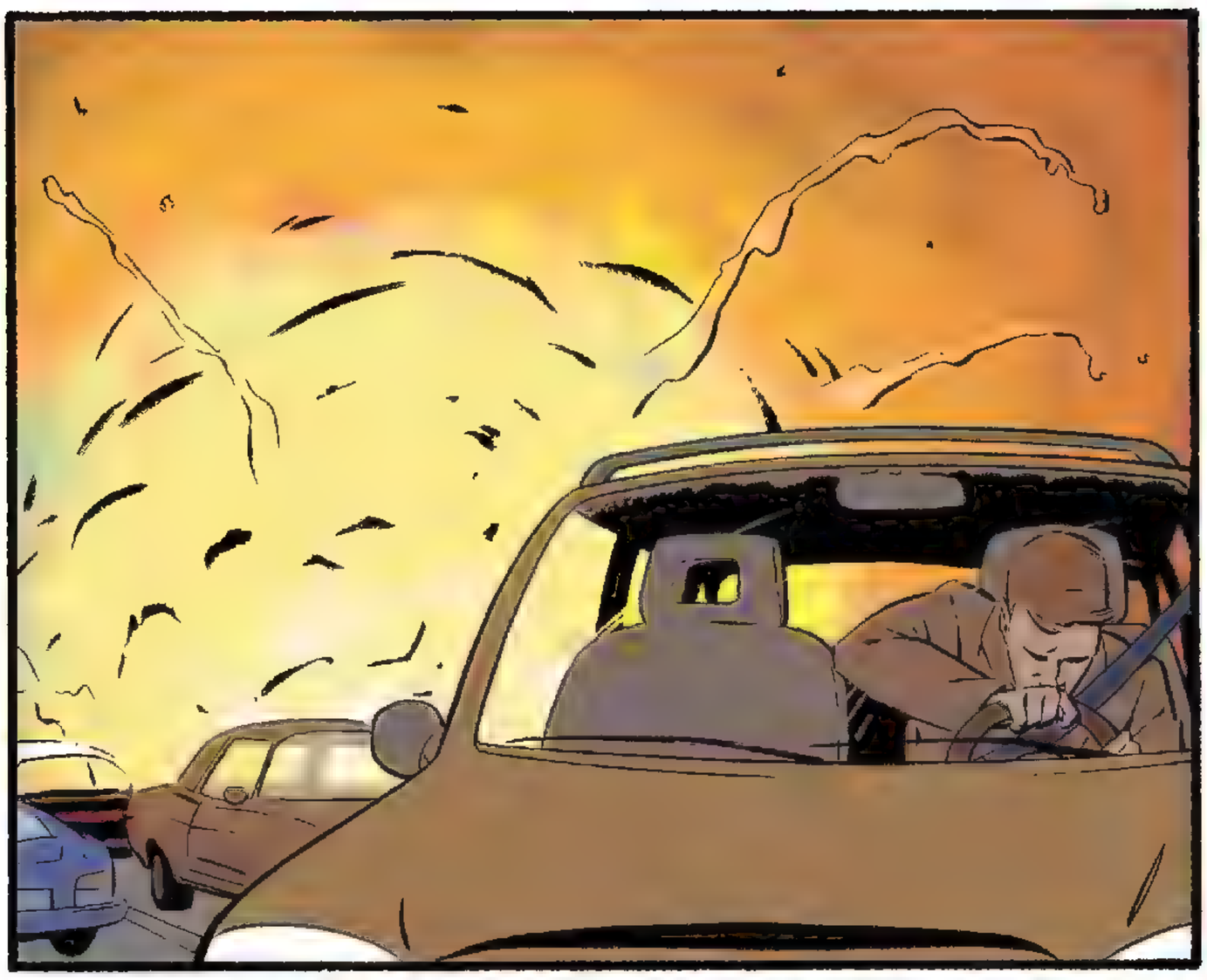
GO HOME AND HAVE A *DRINK*, TOBEY, GET SOME REST.

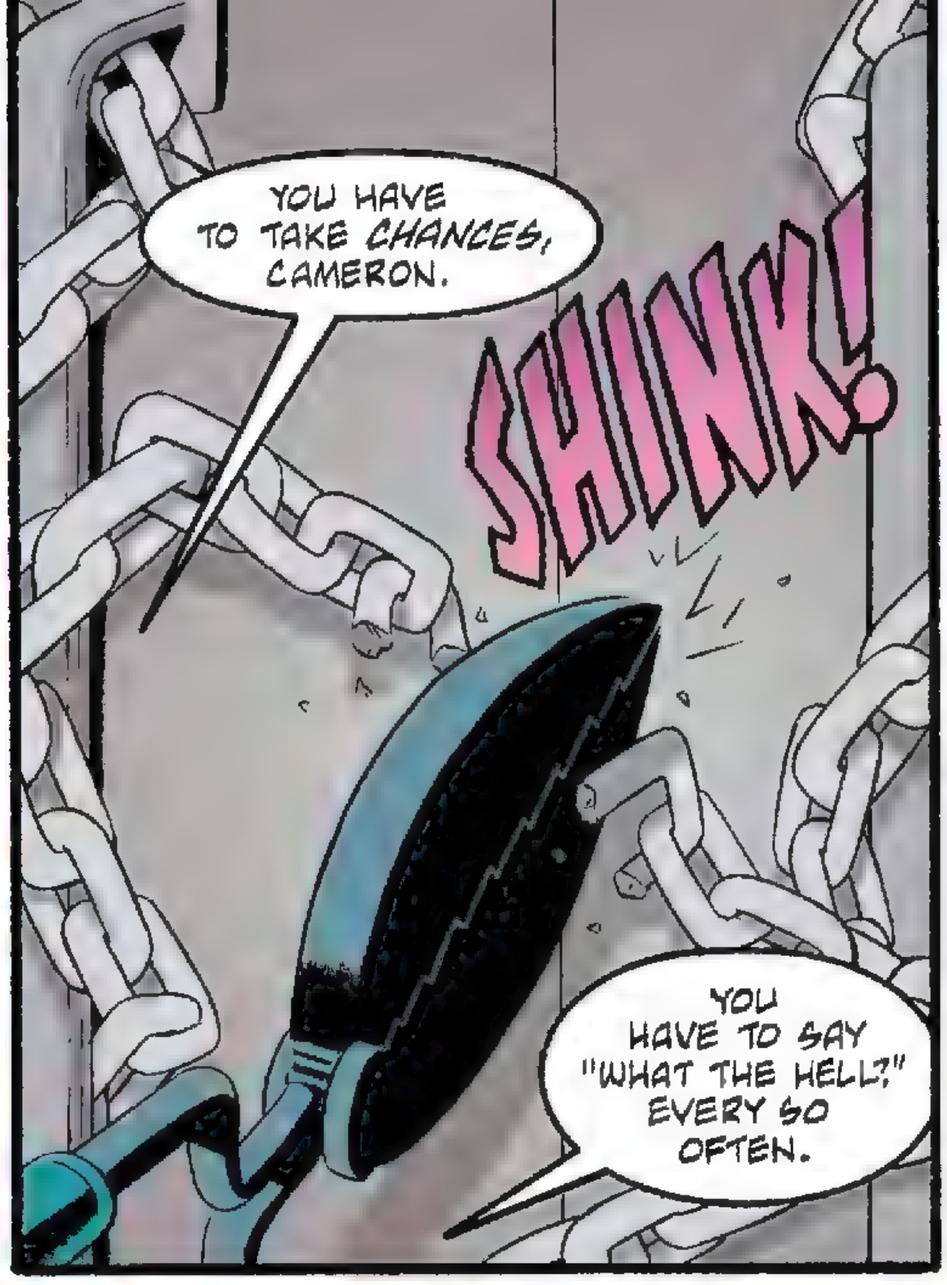
TWO DRINKS.

WE'LL TALK ABOUT THAT *VIKING* PICTURE ON MONDAY.

VIKING PICTURE... *jeesh...*

I'M GONNA GO BACK TO SIT-COMS AND...





CHAPTER FIVE:

MOTH TO A FLAME

SCOTT BEATTY &
CHUCK DIXON STORY
MARCOS MARTIN PENCILS
ALVARO LOPEZ INKS
JAVIER RODRIGUEZ COLORS
HEROIC AGE SEPARATIONS
WILLIE SCHUBERT LETTERS
NACHIE CASTRO ASSISTANT EDITOR
MATT IDELSON EDITOR

You know what?

I bet he's done. And if he hasn't figured that out yet, he'll no doubt sizzle his antennas by flying too close to the limelight.

Forget Cameron Van Cleer...and forget about keeping case files from my "extracurricular" activities on the office PC.

That's about as stupid as a "Killer Moth."

NOTE TO SELF: Burn this.

Can you believe the mouth on this chick?

It must be all that extra lung capacity.

GOTCHA, BLONDIE!

TWEEE--erk!

All sarcasm aside, the Canary chirps with the best of them.

CHAPTER SIX: BIRD OF PREY

She's also a Black Belt in Judo.

LIKE IT ROUGH--

The thug's off-balance and planted headfirst in an effortless Hane Makikomi throw.

--Huh?

This songbird has all the spirit of a raptor.

OUFF!

THWAK

THEY'RE GETTING AWAY!

YELL AT THEM AGAIN OR SOMETHING!

WAY AHEAD OF YOU, KID.

TWEE--
--eeh...
...eeh...

DAMN.

SORRY, KID.

I'M ALL CRIED OUT RIGHT NOW.

This is what I get for writing off the Killer Moth.

COME ON!

He didn't quit.

He didn't leave town.

He went and got himself a partner.

That makes two of us.

I'm not flying solo either.

FWOOM

WATCH IT, KID!

WOO.

Canary's bike is toast.

They'll regret not scorching my ride.

But to be fair, it's a loaner...

...SOMETHING TO GET YOU BACK AND FORTH ON PATROLS.

CAN'T EXPECT YOU TO MAKE ANY HEADWAY SWINGING AROUND ON *JUMPLINES* ALL NIGHT.

THOUGH YOU'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO STASH IT SOMEPLACE OTHER THAN THE *HOMESTEAD*.

IS *HE* BEHIND THIS?

YOU'RE *KIDDING*, RIGHT?

NOW, SAFETY FIRST IN ALL THINGS.

MORE FLASH-BANG PELLETS AND REGURGITANT CAPS.

PLUS A REBREATHER, BRAND-NEW AND NEVER BEEN USED.

CROSS MY HEART.

THE BIKE'S EQUIPPED WITH SELF-DESTRUCT IF YOU NEED TO DITCH IT.

FLIP THIS AND COUNT TO *TWENTY*. PHOSPHORUS CHARGES WILL REDUCE EVERYTHING TO A NIFTY AND INCRIMINATING EVIDENCE-FREE *ASH*.

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

He doesn't say anything for the longest time.

And then he tells me that "he's just doing his part for the good of Gotham."

His voice cracks just a little, though.

Why is it I only attract the weird ones?

BINOCULAR MODE
NIGHTVISION: Enabled
MAGNIFICATION: 20X
DISTANCE TO TARGET: 74 Meters
LIGHT AMPLIFICATION: Max

BINOCULAR MODE
NIGHTVISION: Enabled
MAGNIFICATION: 20X
DISTANCE TO TARGET: 74 Meters
LIGHT AMPLIFICATION: Max

THAT'LL DO... CHUM.

SHE ACCEPTED THE BATCYCLE?

YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN HER... UP-CLOSE, I MEAN.

SHE COULDN'T *WAIT* TO TAKE IT OUT FOR A TEST-RIDE.

AND SHE STILL BELIEVES YOU'RE SUPPLYING HER ON YOUR OWN?

DEFINITELY. SHE THINKS YOU WANT HER TO FAIL.

I WANT HER TO STAY *ALIVE* UNTIL SHE WISES UP AND QUITS.

YEAH, WELL... I DON'T SEE IT HAPPENING ANYTIME SOON.

SOMEHOW, I THINK WE'VE ACTUALLY GIVEN HER A NEW *DIRECTION.*

REMOTE CAMERA #1
Batcycle #3 Display - Real-Time
NIGHTVISION: Enabled
MAGNIFICATION: 5X
DISTANCE TO TARGET: .2 Meters
LIGHT AMPLIFICATION: Bloom Suppression Activated

(~ ~)

I have no idea where I'm going...

...and I'm hoping they don't, either.

I've got a sick feeling this chase could end in a speed-trap with the Bugs netting the Bat and the Bird.

The Batcycle's light and agile, but it wasn't built for tandem riding.

LEAN *INTO* THE TURNS, KID!

ROAD RASH I CAN DO *WITHOUT!*

I'D LIKE TO RUN THEM BOTH RIGHT INTO A TREE.

BACK OFF A LITTLE.

LET'S SEE HOW THIS PLAYS OUT BEFORE YOU GET ALL STEAMED UP.

FOR THE LOVE OF PETE, SCORCHY... *FLAME ON,* ALREADY!

JUST KEEP HER STEADY, Y'HEAR?

YOU BROADS THINK YER HOT?

HOTTER'N *THIS* EVEN?

FWOOSH

OH, FUDGE...

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN, SISTER.

No way.

WE BETTER DITCH!

Two months ago I broke into the headquarters of the world's first superhero society in order to impress this woman.

She didn't bother to R.S.V.P.

HOW MUCH DO YOU WEIGH?

PROFES-SIONAL SECRET, GIRLFRIEND.

Now we're trading bon mots like sorority sisters...

...or biker chicks in fishnets and leather.

Bad girls.

Bad enough to make the Bugs up ahead get desperate.

As if felonious assault and kidnapping one of the top G.C.P.D. cops wasn't desperate enough.

VIP VIP VIP VIP VIP VIP VIP VIP

They've got my Dad...

...CAPTAIN JAMES GORDON, THE *GOODY-GOODY* WHO'S BEEN RATTING OUT ALL THE BLUE BOYS ON OUR PAYROLL.

I WANT YOU TWO TO WEAR THOSE FANCY GETUPS AND TAKE GORDON FOR A *RIDE*.

TAKE HIM OUT TO THE GREENHOUSE AND WAIT UNTIL YOU HEAR FROM ME.

HOW'S THEM HANDS, TONY?

JUST DO WHAT I'M PAYING YOU TO DO AND DON'T SWEAT THE DETAILS. THAT *AIN'T* YOUR CONCERN.

CONSIDER GORDON *MOTH-EATEN*.

HAHAHAHAHAHA HAHAHAHAHA

NO RESPECT.

MY PLACE GETS ROASTED AND I HAVE TO HIRE *THESE BOZOS* TO SET THINGS RIGHT.

THEY GOT NO CLUE, TONY--

WAY YOU GOT THIS SCAM FIGURED--

"--A LITTLE POLICE RAID'LL KILL THOSE BUGS *DEAD.*"

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO TELL YOU, JIM.

THE ROBBERS ARE GETTING ROBBED AND ANYBODY WHO DOESN'T PONY UP GETS THEIR *LEGIT* BUSINESS FRONT *LIT UP.*

SOMEBODY'S SHAKING DOWN THE PROTECTION RACKETS FOR PROTECTION.

I HEAR EVEN TOUGH TONY BRESSI'S TAKING A HIT.

THE GOTHAM GAZE

SERIAL ARSONIST SEARS AGAIN!

GCPD/GCFD INVESTIGATORS FUMING!

FERN FATALE CREEPS DOWN ARKHAM WALLS

NO MENTION OF KILLER MOTH?

BUG SQUAT. NOBODY'S TALKING. YOU KNOW THE MOB AND THEIR 'CODE OF SILENCE' HOODOO.

EVEN THAT MOVIE COMPANY?

THEIR LAWYER SAYS THEIR FIRE WAS *ACCIDENTAL*... SPECIAL EFFECTS GONE OUT OF CONTROL.

THAT ACTRESS, TRACY WHATEVER, SHE'S LOOKING AT ABOUT A *HUNDRED* SKIN-GRAFTS.

I SEE YOU'RE STILL KEEPING THE OLD BUSINESS NAME.

I INHERITED LANCE'S CLIENT LIST WHEN HE DIED.

LANCE INVESTIGATIONS

PRIVATE DETECTIVE

THE MISSUS DIDN'T MIND... NEITHER DID THE DAUGHTER.

GOOD KID... GOT HERSELF A FLOWER SHOP WAY OUT IN STAR CITY.

KEEP YOUR EAR TO THE GROUND, BENNY.

BRESSI'S GOT A SHORT FUSE.

AND IF TONY'S REALLY BEING SHAKEN DOWN, I IMAGINE HE'S JUST ABOUT READY TO *BLOW.*

KEEP THIS UNDER YOUR HAT, SON.

SOMETIMES PRIVATE DETECTIVES CAN GO PLACES WE CAN'T.

DAMMIT... I FORGOT MY COAT.

I'LL GET IT, CAPTAIN.

I RAN STEEPLECHASE IN HIGH SCHOOL.

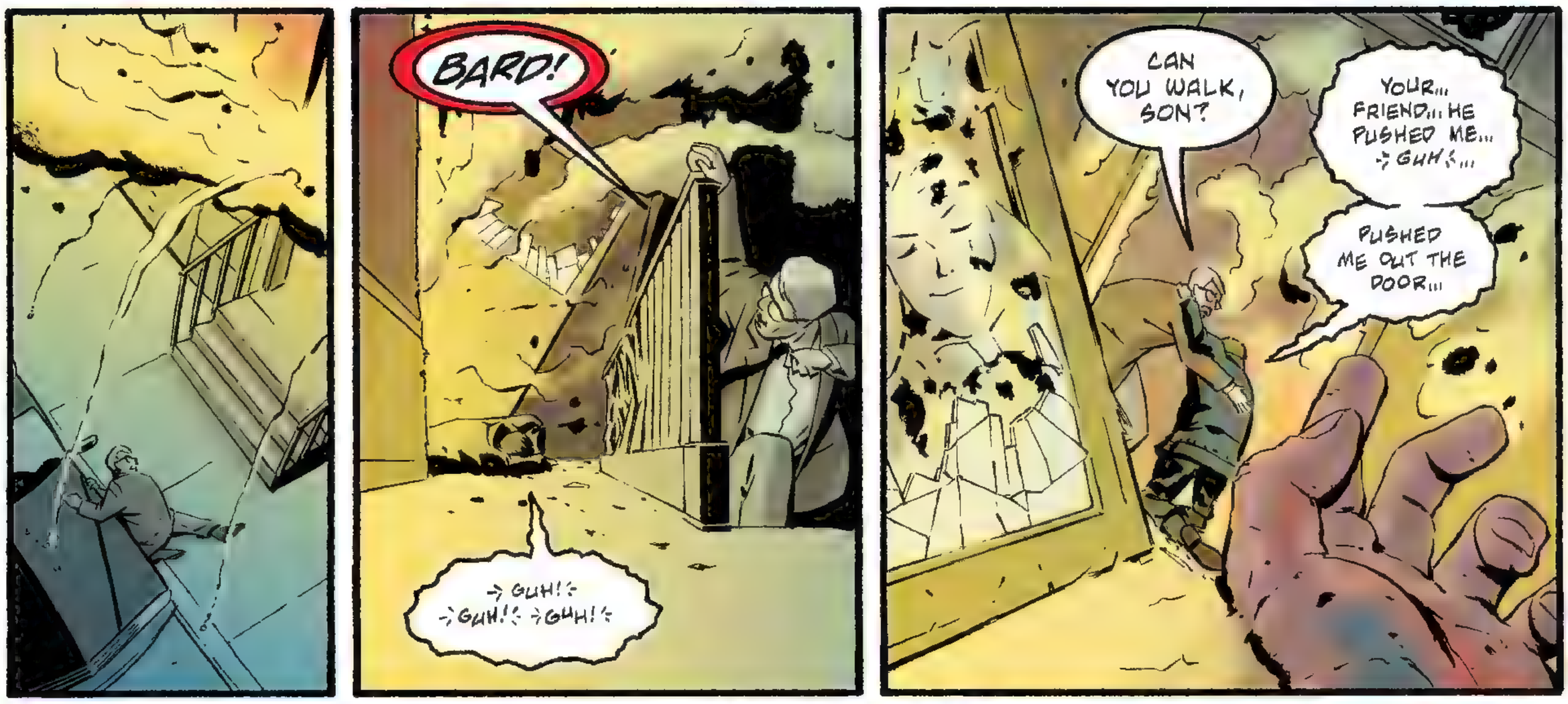
YOU LOOK ME UP IF YOU EVER WANNA BE A *REAL* DETECTIVE, BOYO--

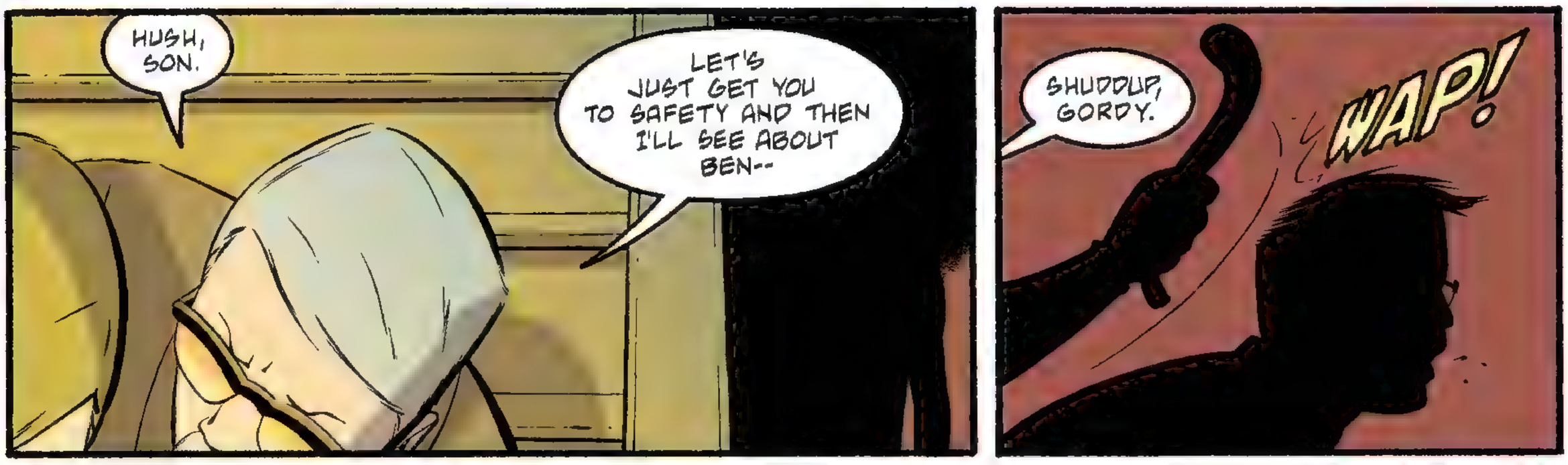
--NO.

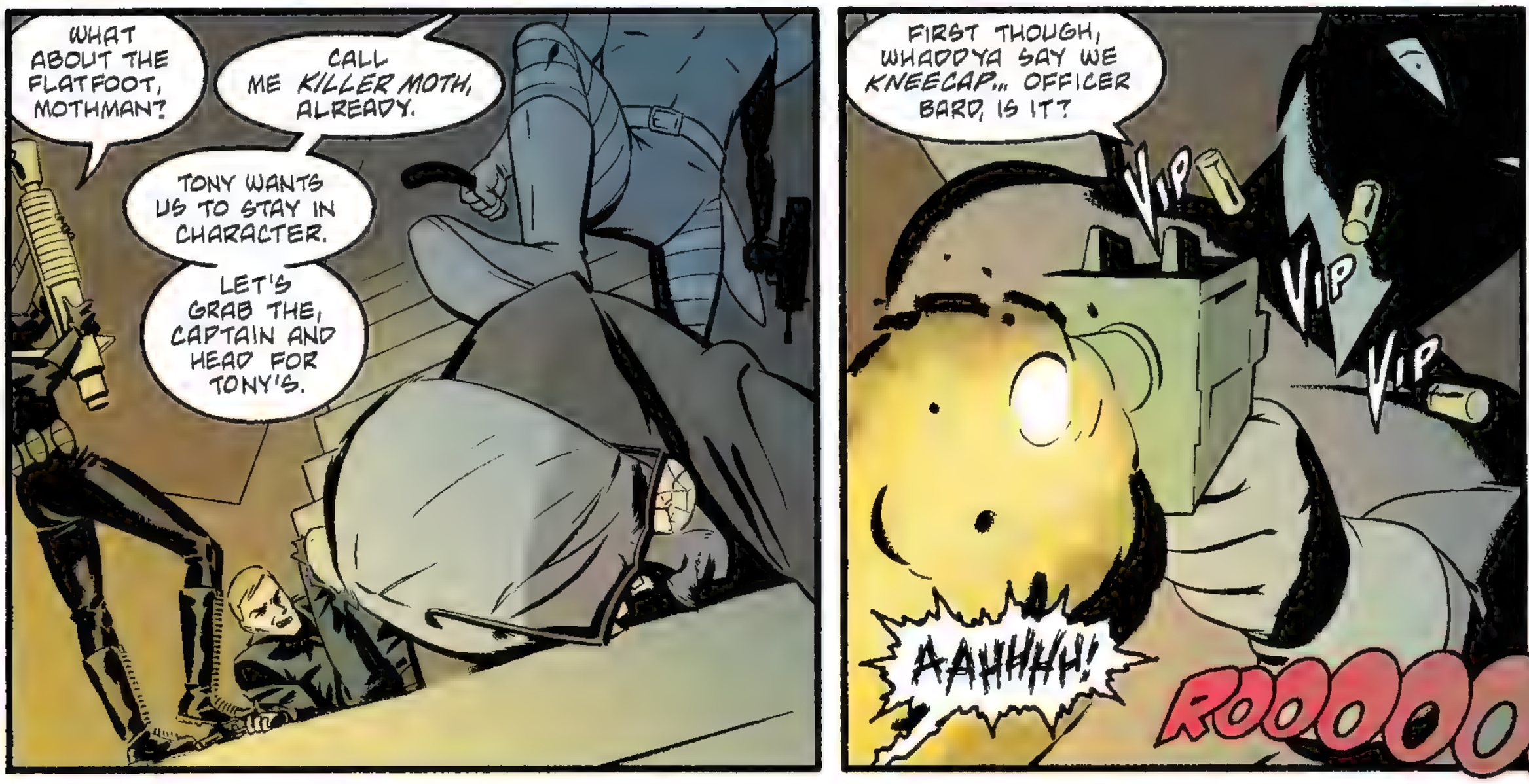
GET OUTTA HERE, BOYO!

SWEET LORD...

BA-HOOM


BARD!
-> GUH!<
-> GUH!<- -> GUH!<
CAN YOU WALK, SON?
YOUR... FRIEND... HE PUSHED ME... -> GUH<...
PUSHED ME OUT THE DOOR...


HUSH, SON.
LET'S JUST GET YOU TO SAFETY AND THEN I'LL SEE ABOUT BEN--
SHUDDUP, GORDY.
WAP!


WHAT ABOUT THE FLATFOOT, MOTHMAN?
CALL ME KILLER MOTH, ALREADY.
TONY WANTS US TO STAY IN CHARACTER.
LET'S GRAB THE, CAPTAIN AND HEAD FOR TONY'S.
FIRST THOUGH, WHADDYA SAY WE KNEECAP... OFFICER BARD, IS IT?
VIP
VIP
VIP
AAHHHH!
ROOOOOOO

OOROOOOOOO

WHAT'S THIS, THEN?

WHERE ARE THE *SPOILSPORTS* OFF TO IN SUCH A RUSH?

GAR, I'M DYING HERE.

CAN WE CUT THE TEMPERATURE BACK JUST A LITTLE?

I MEAN... *VEEZ.*

COME ON, CAMERON.

LET'S GO CHASE SOME FIRETRUCKS.

THEN WE'LL STOP AND SEE IF BRESSI'S WARMED TO OUR BUSINESS PROPOSITION.

GREAT... OUT OF THE FRYING PAN AND INTO THE FIRE.

Pixie-Boots must wear thermal underwear when he's riding one of these.

Wind-chill's gotta be murder with those shorty-pants he wears.

Cute legs, though.

NOW LEAVING GOTHAM CITY LIMITS

What I still can't figure out is why he's going to so much trouble to help me.

SCAN

If Poppa Bat ever found out, there'd be hell to pay in that high-tech belfry they skulk around.

...ZZZT... ALL UNITS TO SCHWARTZ AND HECK! BOMB AND TAC SQUADS SCRAMBLE...

...BE ADVISED THAT CAPTAIN GORDON IS POSSIBLE HOSTAGE OF KILLER MOTH AND MASKED ASSOCIATE... SZRT...

No.

This isn't happening...

"MY DAD?

ENTERING GOTHAM CITY
PLEASE REDUCE SPEED AND DRIVE CAREFULLY

"HIS OLD OFFICES, YOU MEAN?"

"YEAH. THAT'S ASSUMING THE TRIANGULATION IS RIGHT ON THIS DAMN *TROUBLE-ALERT* WHATZIS."

"CAN YOU SIT ME DOWN *CLOSE* TO THE ACTION?"

"I CAN COME *WITH*, PRETTY BIRD."

UH-UH. YOU'RE ON MONITOR DUTY, BOWMAN.

BESIDES, YOU NEED PRACTICE ON ACCESSING THE LEAGUE MAIN-FRAME'S MEMORY BANKS.

NEVER KNOW WHEN THIS COMPUTER STUFF MIGHT CATCH ON, YOU OLD FOGEY.

SO, HOWZABOUT SCRAMBLING MY ATOMS ALREADY?

IS THAT A DIRTY INNUENDO--

--OR JUST WISHFUL THINKING ON MY PART?

SEND

KEEP IT IN THE QUIVER, OLLIE...

I TOLD YOU I'M IN THIS RELATIONSHIP FOR THE LONG HAUL--

--NOT JUST THE PASSIONATE FIREWORKS.

OH, DADDY... YOUR POOR OLD OFFICE...

OFFICERS?

I'M THE BLACK CANARY. THESE ARE MY JUSTICE LEAGUE CREDENTIALS.

I'M HERE TO--

BOOM!

--HELP?

EVERYBODY! DOWN! ALL UNITS REPORT!

The cops and firefighters and paramedics are too busy with the broad in hot-pants to notice me.

I need to figure out how to reverse this costume for urban camo.

Batcycle. That's what it's called.

Or maybe carry a change of clothes in saddlebags on the bike.

I better start using the secret passwords if I'm going to belong to The Club.

OFFICER BARD?

TOLD YOU... CALL ME... JASON...

JASON, LISTEN CLOSELY...

I KNOW YOU'RE IN A LOT OF PAIN, BUT I NEED TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO MY DAD.

MOTH... ANOTHER GUY... THEY FIRE-BOMBED LANCE'S...

...TOOK CAPTAIN... TOUGH TONY'S GREENHOUSE THEY SAID...

THANKS, JASON, I'LL FIND HIM.

"Tough Tony" Bressi's got a ten-acre spread in Somerset just south of the airport.

I'll start with the greenhouse, all right.

NO, BABSY... JUST GET INTO TROUBLE...

AHHHK!

I'm already up to my cowl in it, Jason.

LANCE

And you'll be lucky to walk again because of it.

I'm done playing shoo-fly with Killer Moth.

Remember the lady in hot-pants?

That was no lady.

YOU?!

That was the Black Canary.

Small world.

YOU'RE ONE OF *HIS* GANG?

UM... YEAH... I'M NEW.

BATGIRL.

WELL... *BATGIRL*... I'M ASSUMING YOU'VE GOT A LEAD FROM THAT HANDSOME YOUNG COP.

"SO HUSTLE UP YOUR *BAT-WHEELS* AND LET'S ROLL."

THAT LITTLE BAT-BRAT!

STILL CARRYING A TORCH FOR HER, I SEE.

"I'D RATHER BURN *THEM*, FIREFLY."

KILLER MOTH AND ANOTHER THUG!

THEY'VE ABDUCTED CAPTAIN GORDON AND I THINK I KNOW WHERE THEY'RE HEADED!

I DON'T THINK HE'S EVER MENTIONED YOU!

SHOULDN'T YOU BE CHECKING IN WITH HIM?

WHO?

HIM! YOUR BOSS! BATMAN!

NAH...

"... I'M KIND OF A FREE AGENT."

DO YOU SEE THOSE COSTUMES?

SOMEBODY'S STEALING OUR *SHTICK!*

JUST KEEP TAILING THEM, CAM.

WHEN THEY RUN OUT OF STEAM, WE'LL INTRODUCE A LITTLE *SCORCHED-EARTH* POLICY.

TAKE *THIS*, Y'HEAR?

I CAN'T BOTH DRIVE *AND* SHOOT!

URF!

CRIPES!

VIP VIP VIP VIP VIP VIP!

C'MON, KID!

TIME TO TAKE A POWDER!

We've teamed up for less than an hour and I've already lost count of how many times she's saved my life.

Talk about lousy first impressions.

NOK NOK NOK NOK

THAT BETTER NOT BE ONE OF YOUR DINGY GIRLFRIENDS, RHONDA...

TONY!

HUSTLE UP, FIREBUG! THEY GOTTA BE HOT ON OUR TAILS!

YOU IDIOTS!

I TOLD YOU TWO STUPID MUGS TO STASH GORDON AT THE GREENHOUSE AND WAIT FOR MY CALL!

THEN I'D TELL YA WHERE TO DUMP THE BODY SO THE BLUE-BOYS WOULD PIN THOSE *REAL* BUGS WITH THE HIT!

WAIT A SEC--

--WHO'S HOT ON YOUR TAILS?

NOK NOK NO

TONY, SWEETIE, THESE AIN'T *MY* GIRLFRIENDS!

NO?

THEY CERTAINLY STOKE THE FLAMES OF *OUR* PASSION, HOT STUFF.

DO ME A FAVOR, KIDDO.

NAME IT.

PROMISE ME WE WON'T EVER MAKE THIS LITTLE PARTNERSHIP A *REGULAR* THING.

DONE.

She's right.

Some dynamic duo we'd make...

SCOTT BEATTY &
CHUCK DIXON STORY
MARCOS MARTIN PENCILS
ALVARO LOPEZ INKS
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WILLIE SCHUBERT LETTERS
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MATT IDELSON EDITOR

MM'
AL '03

The residence of "Tough" Tony Bressi in lovely Somerset.

7,000 square feet on ten acres.

Six-car garage. Temperature-controlled wine cellar.

Olympic pool. Riding ring and stables. Tennis courts.

FWOOM

Some fire damage.

The Black Canary and I thought we were just following Killer Moth and Firefly to where my dad was being held captive.

But we were following fakes, and the real Psycho Bug Twins were following us.

Then things got CRAZY.

CHAPTER SEVEN: HEARTS AFIRE

HOLD THEM OFF WHILE I FREE MY... CAPTAIN GORDON.

JUST LIKE A BAT-KETEER...

ALREADY GIVING EVERYONE ORDERS.

WE'LL HAVE YOU OUT OF HERE IN A SECOND, SIR.

WHO ARE YOU?

NOBODY TAKES MY SHTICK.

CROSS THE FIREFLY AND YOU BURN.

hwoop!

USING MY NAME AND MY GAGS TO BUILD A REP, huh?

PRETTY LAME IMITATION, FAKER.

um... uh... damn...

I THINK YOU WERE TRYING TO DO--

--THIS!

WE HAVE TO *MOVE*, SIR.

LEGS ARE *NUMB*-- CAN'T WALK--

unnh!

*eeee

BWA-KOOM

GO!

:kOff!:
:kaff!:

uh!

TONY, WHAT'S--

SHUT UP!

WELL, DIDN'T *THIS* EVENING TURN INTO A TRAIN WRECK.

I LOST TRACK OF KILLER BEE AND LIGHTNING BUG IN ALL THE CHAOS.

YOU'D BETTER *VANISH*, BATGIRL. THIS IS ABOUT TO GET *HIGH-PROFILE*.

UM...GUESS YOU'RE *RIGHT*, CANARY.

LOOKIT MY *HOUSE*. YOU SKANKS *TORCHED* IT!

THIS IS *YOUR* MESS, BRESS!

WE JUST *STUMBLED* INTO IT. WE MIGHT EVEN HAVE SAVED YOUR *LIFE*.

YOU CAN'T *PROVE* NOTHIN'!

I'LL JUST SAY YOU AND YOUR FREAK PALS BUSTED IN ON ME AND--

THOK!

I'm not looking forward to the long walk home.

But the bike's scrap metal... and I can't afford to leave any Bat-Evidence lying around.

It's bad enough that Batgirl and Dad have had two close encounters.

Pretty soon it'll be twenty and...

Twenty.

Pixie Boots said to count to TWENTY.

Wake up, Barbara... or you'll be immolating right alongside what's left of your fancy Batcycle.

And quit worrying so much...

You're playing in the Big Leagues now.

PRETTY BIRD?

MAYBE AFTER A LONG, HOT SHOWER.

MY FEATHERS ARE A LITTLE *SINGED*, MISTER QUEEN.

AND *PLUCKED*, CANARY! WHY DIDN'T YOU SIGNAL FOR ASSISTANCE?

WE HAD EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL.

WE? BATS WAS THERE TO MIX IT UP WITH YOU?

I THOUGHT HE...

NOT BAT*MAN*--

--BATGIRL.

SEEMS OUR RESIDENT DARK KNIGHT IS IN A *FAMILY* WAY.

I DON'T GET IT.

"WHAT HAPPENED TO THE *OTHER* KID?"

I'M AFRAID IT'S JUST *ME* TONIGHT, CAPTAIN GORDON.

WHERE'S THE FIRE?

OFF

UNDER CONTROL, LAD.

FALSE ALARM, REALLY... I WAS HOPING TO HAVE A LITTLE CHAT WITH YOUR *PARTNER*.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE HE'S IN TIBET?

MUCH CRIME *THERE*, BOY WONDER?

YOU HAVE NO IDEA.

I WON'T BORE YOU WITH TALES OF ASSASSIN CULTS AND DEADMAN SPIRITS YEARNING FOR VENGEANCE.

BURNING THE CANDLE AT BOTH ENDS A LOT THESE DAYS, ISN'T HE?

I THINK HE'D PREFER TO CALL IT *MULTI-TASKING*.

NOT RECRUITING NEW HELP?

EXPANDING THE *FRANCHISE*, SO TO SPEAK?

AND HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT A BATWOMAN OR BATHOUND BOGARTING THE *TRADEMARK*?

I'VE HAD A *LONG* NIGHT, LAD...

JUST DO ME A FAVOR AND TELL HIM TO SHUT HER DOWN BEFORE I DO.

What did you expect, Barbara?

After last night you're fortunate not to be in the burn ward of Gotham General.

Count yourself lucky that only the exposed skin was seared.

Lucky me.

NOK NOK NOK

~SMILE

HONEY, ARE YOU OKAY IN THERE?

IS THIS A GIRL THING?

BECAUSE IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE A WHILE...

JEEZ, DAD.

YOU ACT AS IF YOU'VE NEVER LIVED WITH WOMEN BEFORE.

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'VE OUTLASTED ALL THE OTHERS.

DADDY, YOUR ARM!

IT'S NOTHING.

LISTEN, DO YOUR OLD MAN A FAVOR AND MAKE HIM SOME NICE BLACK COFFEE.

I'll bet Janus Cosmetics never considered marketing their cleansing mud mask to lady vigilantes with flame-dried skin.

I'll also bet I won't be so witty when I have to peel this muck off.

She got ALL the credit.

THE GOTHAM GAZETTE

But what did you expect, Barbara?

CANARY SINGES KIDNAPPER-ARSONISTS

SECOND NEAR-ABDUCTION OF GCPD CAPTAIN

TOUGH TONY'S TORCHED

BUGS BURNED BY BLAZE

You're a creature of the night now.

Too much spotlight and you'll burst into flame.

THE GOTHAM GAZETTE

...ORDINARY SINGES KIDNAPPER-ARSONISTS

SECOND NEAR-ABDUCTION OF GCPD CAPTAIN

TOUGH TONY'S TORCHED

BUGS BURNED BY BLAZE

GREAT.

JUST GREAT.

THE PAPERS EVEN HAVE US CONFUSED WITH THOSE *SECOND-RATE* IDIOTS YOU...

...YOU'RE *CRAZY!*

AM I?

MAYBE THAT'S WHAT IT *TAKES* TO SUCCEED.

SUCCEED?

WE NEARLY GOT *KILLED* TONIGHT! THAT'S YOUR IDEA OF *SUCCESS?*

LISTEN... LET THEM THINK WE'RE *CREMATED.*

WE HOLE UP A WHILE. WE BIDE OUR TIME.

THEN WE FIND THIS LITTLE BATGIRL.

AND WE MAKE HER DANCE A *HOT* LITTLE NUMBER.

"YES WE WILL..."

HOSP

NURSE?

IT'S ME, OFFICER BARD. BARBARA GORDON.

MISS GORDON? HOW'S YOUR FATHER?

WE SETTLED ON BARBARA, REMEMBER?

DAD'S FINE. A LITTLE KIDNAPPING AND ASSAULT IS HIS IDEA OF FUN. THOUGHT I'D STOP BY AND CHECK IN ON YOU...

...AND TO OFFER MY THANKS. YOU GOT THIS LEG SAVING MY DAD.

ALL PART OF THE JOB, RIGHT?

BUT THEY SAY I'LL BE OFF THE FORCE ON A DISABILITY.

I'M SORRY...

IT DOESN'T SEEM FAIR, DOES IT?

YOU GIVE YOUR ALL AND THEY JUST PUT YOU ON THE SHELF.

I DIDN'T GIVE MY "ALL."

THOSE LOSERS STILL MANAGED TO TAKE YOUR FATHER.

BUT IT ALL TURNED OUT ALL RIGHT...

HE'S SAFE AND YOU'RE...

I'M WHAT?

ABOUT TO EMBARK ON A WHOLE NEW CAREER.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

MAYBE I'LL BECOME A MOVIE STAR. OR TRY MY HAND AT PRO BALL.

BARBARA?

DAD!

KEEPING OFFICER BARD COMPANY?

WELL, I...

I'VE GOT TO GO.

GOODNIGHT, JASON.

DONUTS?

Why did Daddy have to show up just then?

And why do I feel just like the time he caught me and the neighbor boy in the treehouse?

Well...

...I'm never going to sleep anyway.

Maybe some fresh air and an adrenaline fix.

Anything to keep me from thinking about Jason and the subject of crime-fighting careers.

I'm not sure I ever intended to go full-time with this.

But it's taking over my life, anyway.

NO! OH, NO!

ITOH

NO!

DON'T GO IN THERE!

But life's what happens when you're making other plans, right?

No one knows what's around the corner.

Except for an Oracle maybe.

NOT THE AXE!

PLEASE NO!

But just when you think you have it figured out...

OH MY GOD!

EEEEEEEEEEE!

There has to be something happening out here tonight besides the standard slumber party massacre.

I'd settle for some Grade-Z super-villain.

The Cavalier even.

Or a good old-fashioned purse-snatcher.

THAT'S FAR ENOUGH!

I'll be fair and give him a count to three.

One.

Two.

Oh, for crying out loud...

IH

WHUD!

CLASSIC.

AND IT SENDS A NICE FEMINIST MESSAGE.

MA'AM.

Wonderful... the other man in my life.

ONLY FIVE HOURS TO TRASH YOUR FIRST BATCYCLE?

HOW... HOW DID YOU KNOW?

THE FLEET'S WIRED TO G.P.S. SENSORS. YOUR BIKE WENT *OFFLINE* LAST NIGHT AROUND MIDNIGHT.

PLEASE LOCK ME UP!

The Fleet?

DON'T SWEAT IT, THOUGH.

A CRASHED WHIRLY-BAT IS MUCH BIGGER *KA-CHING.*

AND THIS IS?

YOU KNOW HIM AFFECTIONATELY AS "*JEEVES.*"

HE WON'T BE SPEAKING MUCH.

SECRET IDENTITY AND ALL THAT JAZZ.

LOOK, I CAN'T *PAY* FOR ANY OF THIS.

I APPRECIATED THE OTHER BIKE AND ALL, BUT--

--IS THAT MY INSIGNIA?

TECHNICALLY, IT'S A KNOCK-OFF OF A MUCH *BIGGER* ICON...

...BUT YOU'RE EARNING CERTAIN FRANCHISE *PRIVILEGES.*

SAYS YOUR DAD?

GUESS AGAIN.

WHERE IS *HE* ANYWAY?

I COULD TELL YOU STORIES ABOUT TIBETAN ASSASSIN CULTS AND DEADMAN SPIRITS YEARNING FOR VENGEANCE BUT YOU PROBABLY WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME.

YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.

NO HELMETS THIS TIME?

AND MISS THE WIND IN OUR COWLS?

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

WE GOT THE *CALL*, BATGIRL.

THE WHAT?

Oh.

The Call.

One I shouldn't really answer.

Ever.

I DON'T THINK TAKING ME TO G.C.P.D. HEADQUARTERS IS SUCH A GOOD IDEA.

WE'RE NOT GOING TO THE G.C.P.D.!

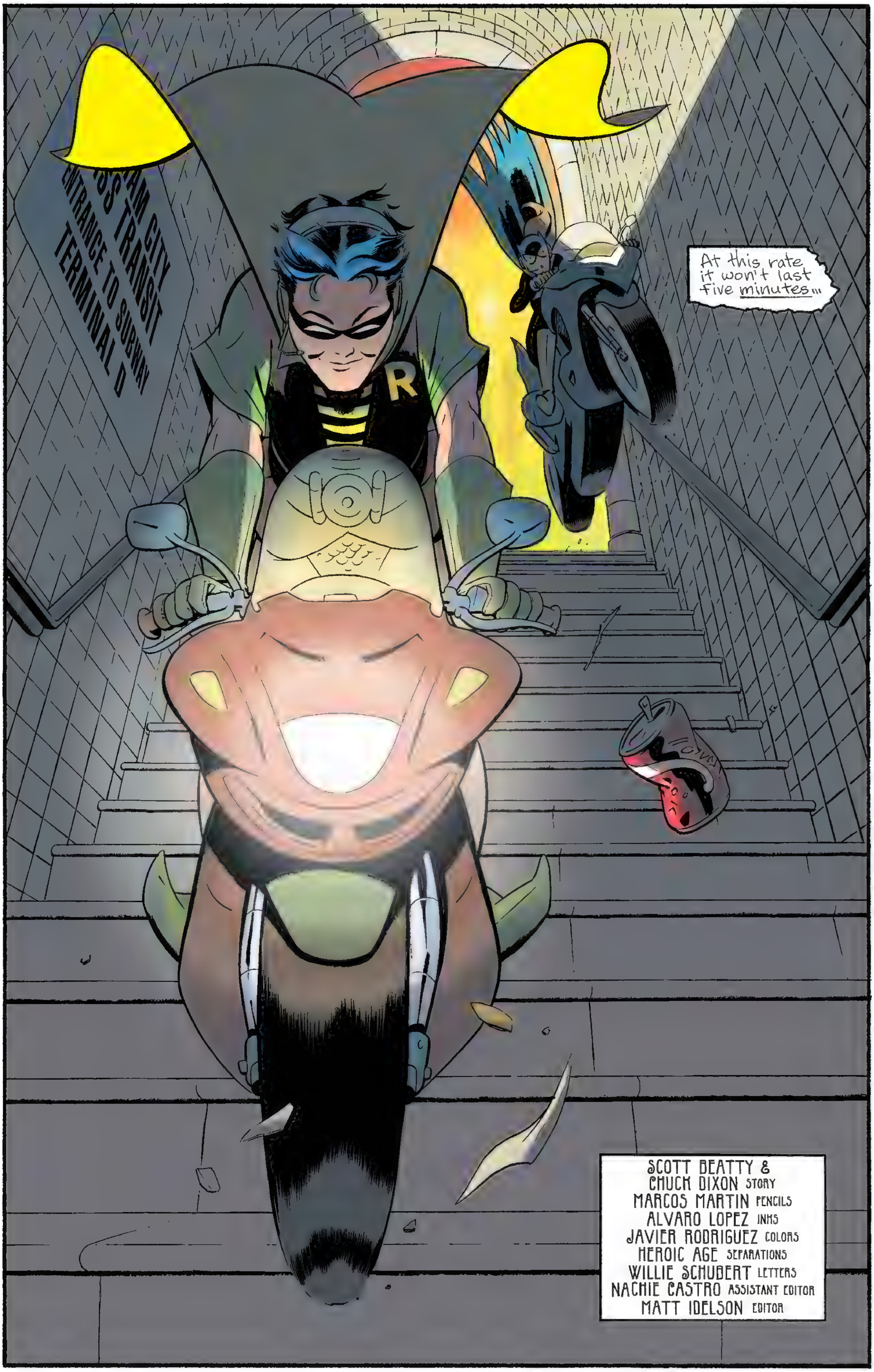
THEN WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

WHERE THE ACTION IS!

AND WHERE IS--

--YOU'RE *KIDDING*, RIGHT?

It won't take me five hours to bust up my second Batcycle, Pixie Boots.


At this rate it won't last five minutes...
SCOTT BEATTY &
CHUCK DIXON STORY
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MM, '03
AL

I'm playing "chicken" with a kid called "Robin."

I don't know why he's showing off.

I don't know why I'm going along with it.

I don't even know where we're going.

It could be a robbery.

Or prison break.

A gang war.

Or free donuts at Lenny's.

He sees that Bat-Signal in the sky and takes off.

Like a bird out of Hell.

And he just expects me to follow him.

CHAPTER EIGHT: SEASONED CRIME-FIGHTER

And I do.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

WHAT'S THE RUSH?

HOSTAGE SITUATION! MIDTOWN STATION!

DON'T HAVE TO SHOUT. YOU'RE WIRED.

He calls himself The Condiment King.

Guess there are so many psychos in this town, all the good themes were taken.

So this clown bases his criminal career on stuff you squirt on sandwiches.

NOBODY MOVE!

A SHOT OF THIS DIJON IN YOUR EYE AND YOU'LL BE SORRY!

BB

CONDIMENT KING

UH?
BACK OFF--
BB
--IF YOU DON'T WANT THE WORKS!
SQUIIIIRP!
oh!
unnh!

DAMN!

YOU'RE REALLY KINDA HARD ON THE *EQUIPMENT.*

WE DID EIGHTY ACROSS A CROWDED SUBWAY PLATFORM FOR *HIM?*

NO!!!

THIS GUY WAS A *SIDESHOW.* THERE'S A *REAL* HOSTAGE CRISIS ON THE "D" TRAIN.

YOU'RE *ENJOYING* THIS.

CRIME-FIGHTING? *SURE.*

I *MEANT* HUMILIATING ME.

HA HA HA HA!

NOW YOU'RE LAUGHING?

I THOUGHT YOU WERE MAD.

THE CONDIMENT KING. REALLY!

HE COULD HAVE BEEN DANGEROUS.

I MEAN, WHO'D THINK A GUY NAMED THE PENGUIN COULD BE TROUBLE?

hee hee hee!

MAYBE YOU'RE NOT SERIOUS ENOUGH ABOUT THIS, BATGIRL.

AND MAYBE YOU'RE TOO--

mmp?

DO YOU HAVE THE SHOT?

GIVE ME JUST A SEC.

TAKE THE SHOT IF YOU HAVE IT.

HE'S A *MONSTER*--

--AND YOU CAN'T REASON WITH HIM.

JEEZ, MARY AND JOE, WOULD YA LOOK AT THE *SIZE* OF THIS GUY...

JUST TAKE HIM *DOWN*, PETTIT...

DO IT BEFORE BATMAN SHOWS UP AND MAKES THIS STEROID-FACTORY *ANGRIER*.

NO SHOT, CAPTAIN...

TRAJECTORIES ARE TOO *IFFY*.

I'M LIABLE TO RICOCHET AND VENTILATE HOSTAGES.

ORDERS?

GRAB YOUR GEAR AND HAUL TAIL TO GRANDENETTI TERMINAL.

IS THAT WHERE THIS TRAIN'S--

--HEY!

MAKE WAY, OFFICERS!

Great. The cops.

I thought we were avoiding the G.C.P.D. on this little joyride.

FOLLOW MY LEAD, OKAY?

AND WATCH OUT FOR THAT THIRD RAIL.

YOU'LL FIND IT RATHER SHOCKING.

Oh, I don't think I'll find anything as shocking as what you just did, Pixie Boots.

Or playing freeze-tag with subway trains and Batcycles.

YEAH, uh, CAPTAIN... IT LOOKS LIKE *THE BATS* ARE ALREADY ON THE SCENE.

BATMAN AND ROBIN?

WELL... YOU'RE *HALF* RIGHT.

LET ME GO IN FIRST AND SOFTEN HIM UP.

IF HE SEES YOU, HE'S JUST LIABLE TO GO BERSERK.

NO WAY, ROBIN. WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND...

"IT'S MARK DESMOND...

"BLOCKBUSTER.

"AND HE REALLY REALLY DOESN'T LIKE BATS."

SMISH YOU ALL!!

RAH!

YOU FIRST!

M-M-ME?

GUNS NOT HURT PEOPLES!

GERT!

CLOP!

HEY, JEEVES.

YOU GOT YER EARS ON, GOOD BUDDY?

I AM INDEED--AS YOU SAY--*WIRED FOR SOUND.*

I TRUST THE YOUNG LADY IS ENJOYING YOUR *OUTING?*

SHE'S--

JUST *FINE*, JEEVES. THANKS FOR ASKING.

YOU ARE MOST WELCOME, MISS... *BATGIRL.*

CAN YOU GET US OFF THE MAIN LINE, AL... uh... *JEEVES?*

MOST ASSUREDLY.

T-TEK-TEK

"I AM PRESENTLY SWITCHING THE WAYWARD TRAM OVER TO WHAT APPEARS TO BE AN *UNUSED* SERVICE TUNNEL.

CLINK-CLANK!

"TREAD CAREFULLY, LAD AND LASS."

"GOTHAM MASS TRANSIT WILL LIKELY REROUTE THE CAR ONCE THEIR SYSTEMS REGISTER MY UNAUTHORIZED *DETOUR.*"

I'LL GO IN FIRST AND--

THIS *ISN'T* A RIDE-ALONG, BOY WONDER.

WHAT'S *THAT* SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

IT MEANS I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE--

--GETTING INTO!

Okay, maybe it's stupid.

But I'm tired of everything being his idea.

Answering the signal.

Chasing this train.

Kissing me.

I want to show some initiative.

Even if it means blowing the Bat-Bike budget for the year.

uhh...

WHUH?

WHAT MAKES NOISE.

PEOPLES DON'T MOVE.

ME SEE WHAT GO BOOM.

WHO THERE?

WHO MAKE NOISE?

He's big. He's ugly.

He's hurting.

HI, HANDSOME.

WHUZZIS?

FSSSSSSST

ARRRRRR!

A whole can of mace in his mouth and eyes.

Might as well be Chanel.

STINGS!

BATWOMAN MAKE ME STING!

Maybe this is a mistake.

I don't even know this guy's story.

ME MAKE BATWOMAN HURT!

Was he born this way?

Was he experimented on?

Some crazy designer drug?

HURT BAD!

And where's the Boy Smoocher?

LET'S GO!

MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE BACK OF THE TRAIN!

Maybe he knows what brings this man-mountain down.

HAH!

LITTLE BATWOMAN.

LITTLE HEAD!

mph!

TINY, TEENY LITTLE BATWOMAN.

mmmph!

ME PULL OFF WINGS.

TEENY ITTY BITTY WINGS.

HA HA HA HA!

AWW... DON'T DIES YET.

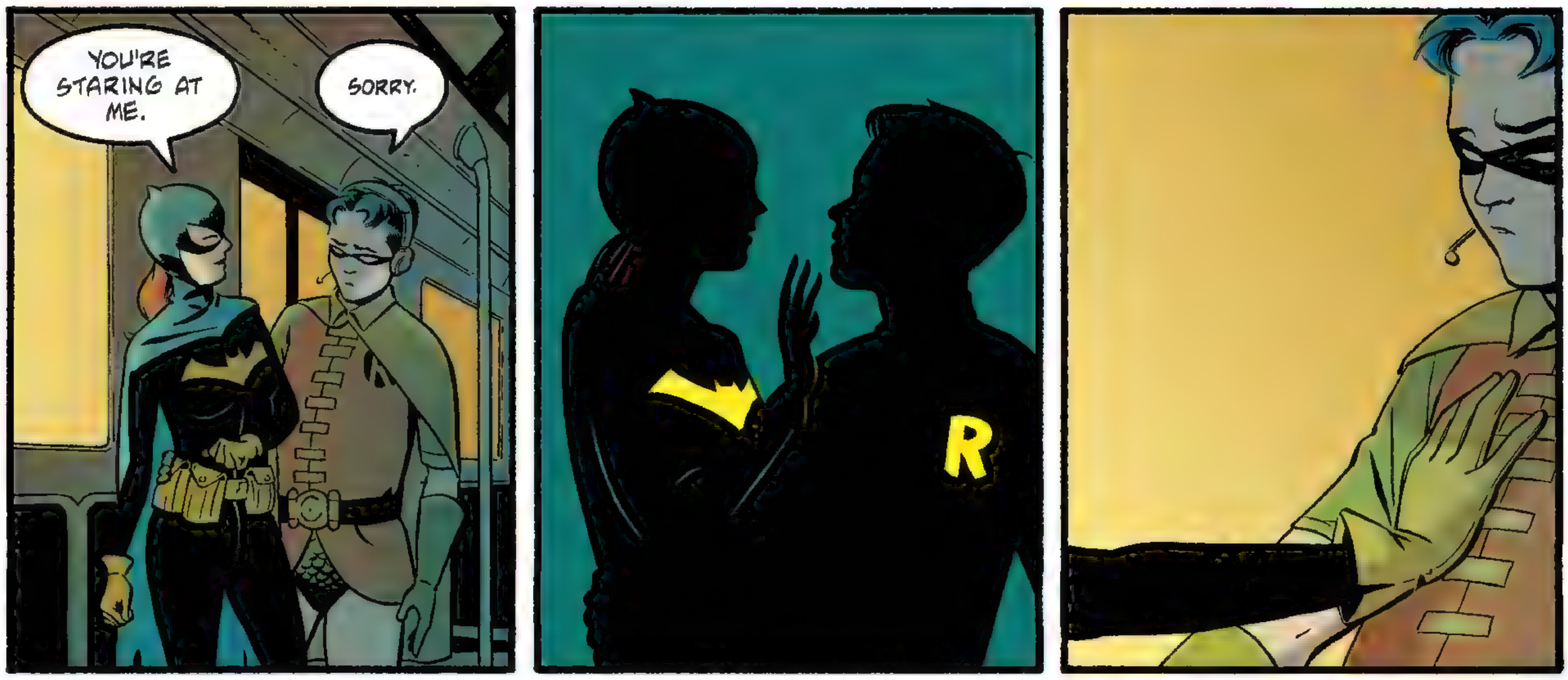
uh?

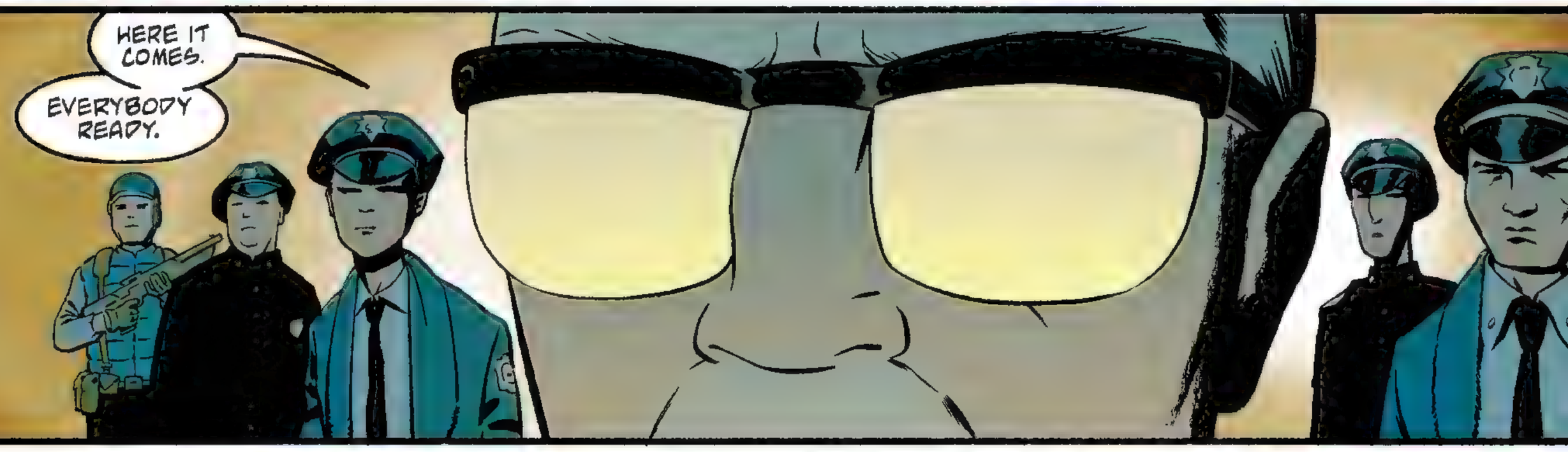
GLUD!

Never thought the air in a Gotham subway could be so sweet.

gasp!!! gasp!!!

I'VE GOT YOU.


YOU'RE STARING AT ME.
SORRY.
R


HERE IT COMES.
EVERYBODY READY.

HE'S UP HERE, CAPTAIN. OUT COLD AS A MACKEREL.
AND TRUSSED LIKE A CHRISTMAS TURKEY.
TRUSSED?

THEY USE THIS STUFF TO TRANK BULL RHINOS DOWN AT THE ZOO.

GIVE HIM *TWO* THEN.

WHO TIED HIM UP?

NO JOKE... ROBIN AND THAT BAT-CHIPPIE WHO SAVED BRUCE WAYNE'S HASH AT THE POLICEMAN'S BALL.

I WAS SO SCARED...

KEEP EVERYBODY BACK.

PAF!

I'M LOOKING FOR MY DAUGHTER.

ALL I SAW WAS BAT-EARS AND *RED* HAIR.

WHADDYA THINK? A CRANE? FORKLIFT MAYBE?

WE'RE GONNA NEED TO GET THIS CLEANED UP BEFORE MORNING RUSH.

MY LUMBAGO!

HAS ANYBODY *READ* SLEEPY HERE HIS MIRANDA?

CAPTAIN GORDON?

VICKI VALE, WGBC ACTION NEWS.

WHAT CAN YOU TELL OUR VIEWERS ABOUT TONIGHT'S SUBWAY STANDOFF?

THE BAT CREEPS ME RIGHT OUT... BUT THIS LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD...

RED.

CAPTAIN GORDON, THE PUBLIC HAS A RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED HERE TONIGHT.

IT'S OLD NEWS WHEN THEY'VE *READ* IT IN THE GOTHAM GAZETTE'S MORNING EDITION.

RED.

THAT'S WHAT I SAID.

RED!

SIR, WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR ORDEAL?

I WAS ONLY PROTECTING MYSELF!

I'M REGISTERED AND WELL WITHIN THE LAW.

He's on to me.

I can't fault the guy for trying.

But he's young and reckless...

"and totally not my type.

But still.

He gives the nicest gifts.

And he knows his way around a kiss.

A girl could do worse.

Though I doubt Daddy Dearest would approve.

Oh Dad, no...

BRRRING

BRRRING

BRRRING

You didn't.

WE NEED TO TALK.

RIGHT NOW.

Calm. Deep breaths.

Don't react. Don't freak. Don't shoot your mouth off.

DON'T MOVE.

BRRRING BRRRING

There's nothing to find.

You were smarter than that.

You saw every eventuality.

GORDON HERE... WHAT IS IT?

You planned for every contingency.

You...

You're playing this all wrong, BaBs...

DAD, HOW COULD YOU?!

NOT NOW, BARBARA.

JUST STAY HERE.

MY ROOM!

WHAT DID YOU EXPECT TO FIND?

P.D.

That's it.

Show him where that red hair comes from.

Get your Irish up and follow him.

Only the truly innocent fight tooth and nail to prove it, right?

If he gets mad, you get madder.

Fight fire with...

FIRE.

Daddy, I'm so sorry.

You left me with no alternative.

They left me with no alternative.

Like Cassandra, I keep looking to the future.

And all I see is ashes and blood.

Ashes and blood.

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MM
AL '03

Cameron Van Cleer and Garfield Lynns.

Killer Moth and Firefly.

One's a hyperactive goofball.

But the other one...

uh... THIS PLACE IS BURNING *DOWN*, GAR.

I KNOW.

ISN'T IT *BEAUTIFUL?*

CHAPTER NINE: ASHES & BLOOD

CAN'T YOU SMELL THE BACON FRYING? HA!

THOSE STUPID COPS'LL NEVER LAUGH AT US AGAIN, MOTH...

NEVER AGAIN.

UM... BUT SHOULDN'T WE BE LEAVING?

AND MISS THIS BEAUTIFUL BLAZE?

ALL THOSE SNITCH JACKETS, AND MUG SHOTS AND...

IT'S GREAT. IT REALLY IS.

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP

LET'S GET A LOOK FROM THE SKY, OKAY?

I LIKE THE WAY YOU THINK, MOTH!

SURE.

Looks like the Moth is restoring his Underworld rep.

He and Lynns are rebuilding a gang.

Only it's not crime that Firefly is into.

Terror is his thing.

With a gang behind him no one in the city is safe.

Gotham can't afford that.

Someone has to stop them.

Right now.

And tonight there's only me.

THE GIRL.

WHO?

THE BATGIRL.

FORGET HER! WE HAVE TO GO!

PILOT! WE HAVE AN UNINVITED GUEST!

WHERE?

ON THE LADDER. SHAKE HER OFF!

WILL DO, BOSS!

OOP!

OH.

One hundred miles an hour plus down Grand Street.

Twenty stories above Grand Street.

The de-cel cord saves me from losing both arms at the shoulder.

But I'm still going sideways at terminal velocity.

Now I know how a bug on a windshield feels.

TENK-U

unnh!

ADMIT IT, MOTH... YOU'RE ENJOYING YOURSELF.

Hee... LOOK AT HER... SO PRETTY AND HELP-LESS...

WE GOT TROUBLE.

COPS?

WORSE.

WONDERFUL.

Here he comes to remind me that this is HIS city.

He's thinking he has to rescue me.

Well, to hell with that.

ANY IDEAS?

NOT MUCH WE CAN DO FROM HERE.

LET'S SEE HOW SHE PLAYS IT.

Only a few options here.

None of them are attractive.

WHAT'S SHE DOING?

I THINK I SEE...

WHAT'S SHE DOING?

HOW SHOULD I KNOW?

I have to get off this ride.

But first I have to slow it down.

I can only hope these lines are as strong as the Boy Wonder advertised.

It holds.

PILOT! WHAT'S GOING ON?

SHE'S MOORED US!

But not forever.

UNGH!

DAMN!

Something's got to give.

SHE'S NOT GOING TO--

NO!

I sure hope I worked out the physics here.

Math is hard...on the fly at least.

BREAK AWAY! GET US FREE!

I CAN'T!

WE'RE SNAGGED!

Stories race by like fence posts on a highway.

Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh.

WE'RE LOSING LIFT! WE'RE GONNA GYRO!

CRASH POSITIONS!

It's been a while since I've been to the Gotham Athletic Club.

I really hope I remember this right.

I've already forgotten my monthly pass.

Just enough speed to punch through the glass.

Not enough to splatter me.

AAAAAGH!

Oh joy.

The pool is full.

And I hit the deep end.

THIS &kaff;s IS ALL YOUR FAULT, MOTH!

ME?

WHO &hakk; WHO WANTED TO BURN &hrrf; THE COP-HOUSE!

RIGHT, BUGFACE, IT'S US.

I'M SURE THERE'S ENOUGH BLAME TO GO AROUND.

uh?

oh. THEM.

I did all the work...

And they'll get all the credit.

It's a Batman's world, Babsy.

Might as well get used to it.

MILK

Witness the anticlimax of my life.

THE GOTHAM GAZETTE
SERIAL ARSONISTS SWATTED!
FIREFLY / MOTH IN CUSTOD

G.C.P.D. STILL STANDS!

My short and happy career as a crime-fighter ends in both a bang AND a whimper.

Dad's too busy repairing the station house to talk about that thing neither of us wants to talk about.

YOU CAN *IGNORE* THEIR RAVINGS, MISTER MAYOR.

YAN CLEER AND LYNNS ARE *CERTIFIABLE*... AND THEY'RE BOTH WARMING CELLS IN *ARKHAM* UNTIL DISTRICT COURT CAN SET A TRIAL.

LT. JAMES GORDON
MAJOR CRIMES

And even if we did, I'm not sure what I'd say...

SO LET ME *REITERATE*...

...nor what I would confess to being.

Not that it matters anymore.

Dad

THERE IS NO *BATGIRL*.

He's so convincing I almost believe him.

Almost.

I figure it's just another crush note from Pixie-Boots.

Something to get my hopes up.

Something to make me think that everything I did was building towards a future.

The corner of O'Neil and Adams.

MIDNIGHT.

B

But it's not.

It's from HIM.

I've been summoned.

But why?

What more is there to say?

WAYNE

CONSTRUCTIO

GET IN.

YOU'RE LATE.

I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE A TRAP.

I DID SOME RECONNOITERING FIRST.

SO DO I GET THE GAS AGAIN?

PUT THIS ON.

YOU'LL NEED ALL YOUR WITS TONIGHT.

JUST A FEW MORE STEPS... THERE.

RELAX AND DO AS HE SAYS.

R

YOU CAN TAKE OFF THE BLIND-FOLD.

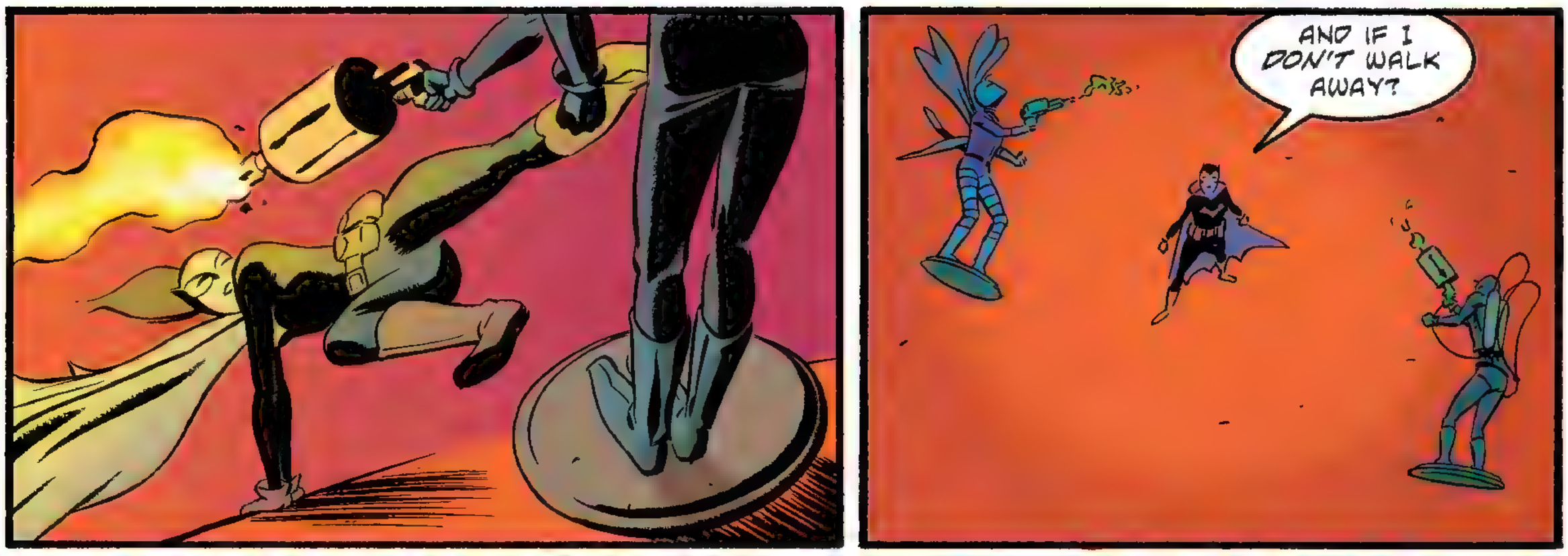
WHAT IS THIS?

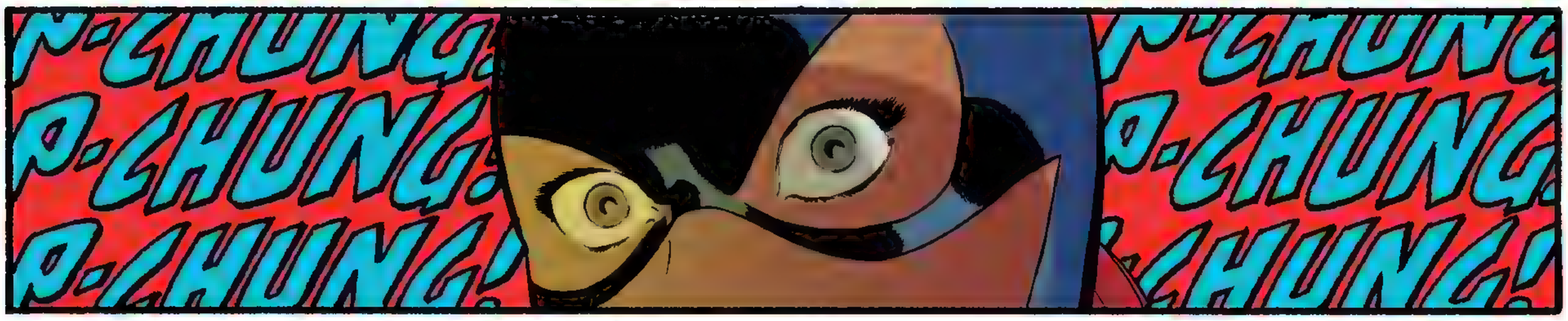
THIS IS YOUR LIFE AT THIS MOMENT.

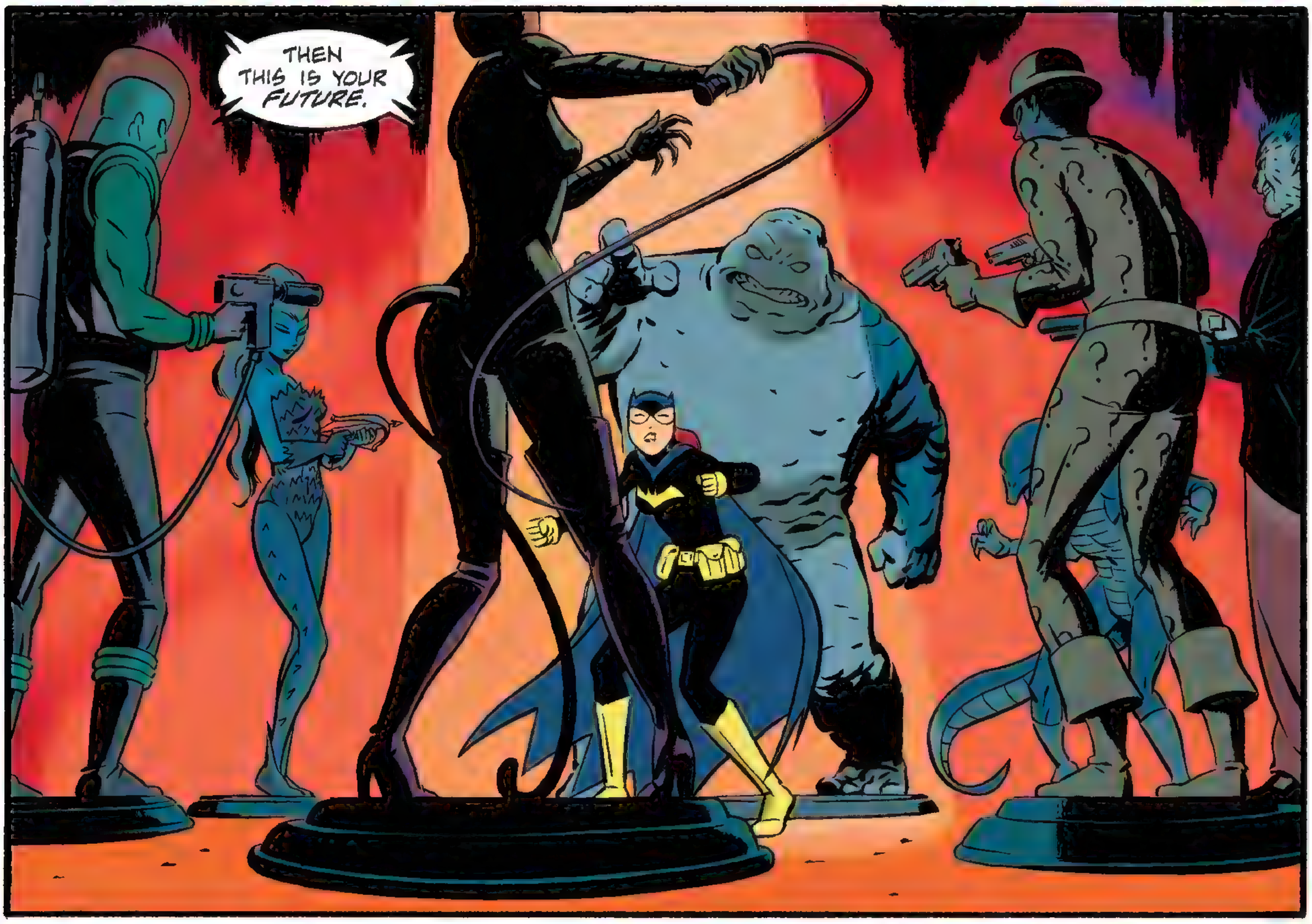
P-CHUNG!

THIS IS ALL YOU HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IF YOU WALK AWAY NOW.

P-CHUNG!


AND IF I DON'T WALK AWAY?


P-CHUNG.
P-CHUNG.
P-CHUNG!


THEN THIS IS YOUR FUTURE.

VUT-VUT-
VUT-

P-CHUNG!

POK!

If this is my future...

I'm not afraid of it.

ALFRED, BRING UP THE LIGHTS.

Alfred?

DO I *PASS?*

WILL YOU *FINALLY* ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I CAN DO THIS?

WILL YOU SWEAR AN OATH?

ANYTIME AND ANYWHERE.

COME WITH ME...

And then it all makes sense.

The expensive toys...

The time and devotion...

The Reason.

I promise loyalty.

I promise secrecy.

And I promise courage.

And all I ask is one small boon in return.

COMMISSIONER, I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE AN *ASSOCIATE*...

A NEW PARTNER UNDER MY *DIRECT* SUPERVISION.

KA-CHAK

THAT WOULD BE YOUR *CUE*, MISTRESS BARBARA.

THANKS... *JEEVES.*

THINK NOTHING OF IT.

MINE IS MERELY A *COACHING* ROLE...

"DEFLECTING YOUR FATHER'S SUSPICIONS FALLS *SQUARELY* ON MASTER ROBIN'S THESPIAN SKILLS."

I THOUGHT SHE *LIKED* ME...

BATMAN...

TWO I'LL ACCEPT.

BUT NO MORE.

DAD, ARE YOU UP HERE?

BARBARA?

OF COURSE...

WHO DID YOU EXPECT?

"BATGIRL, huh?"

RUPERT THORN

IF YOU BELIEVE THE HYPE.

FOR CONGRESS

WELL, IF YOU ASK ME... GOTHAM COULD DO WORSE.

ESPECIALLY WITH A GOOD COP LIKE ME FORCED INTO EARLY RETIREMENT WHILE STILL IN MY PRIME.

FOR CONGRESS

SHUT UP AND PAINT, EX-OFFICER BARD.

PRIVATE DETECTIVE FIRMS DON'T OPEN THEMSELVES.

PIZZA

AND I EXPECT BETTER EATS ONCE YOU START TRAPPING BAD GUYS.

JASON BARD

PRIVATE INVESTIGA

SO WHAT ABOUT YOU, BABS?

HAVE YOU FINALLY GIVEN UP ON LAW ENFORCEMENT?

ACTUALLY, I'M GIVING SERIOUS THOUGHT TO RUNNING FOR PUBLIC OFFICE.

WELL, THAT'S ONE WAY TO FIGHT INJUSTICE.

Somehow I just don't see "Congress-woman Gordon" in my future.

Quite frankly, I don't know what to expect anymore.

Sorry Cassandra.

But despite my great and abiding respect for oracles, I've decided to forgo predictions and portents.

There is what could be...

And there is the life I lead right now.

NOT THE END

SCOTT BEATTY & CHUCK DIXON STORY MARCOS MARTIN PENCILS ALVARO LOPEZ INKS
JAVIER RODRIGUEZ COLORS HEROIC AGE SEPARATIONS WILLIE SCHUBERT LETTERS
NACHIE CASTRO ASSISTANT EDITOR MATT IDELSON EDITOR

SKETCHBOOK

BY MARCOS MARTIN

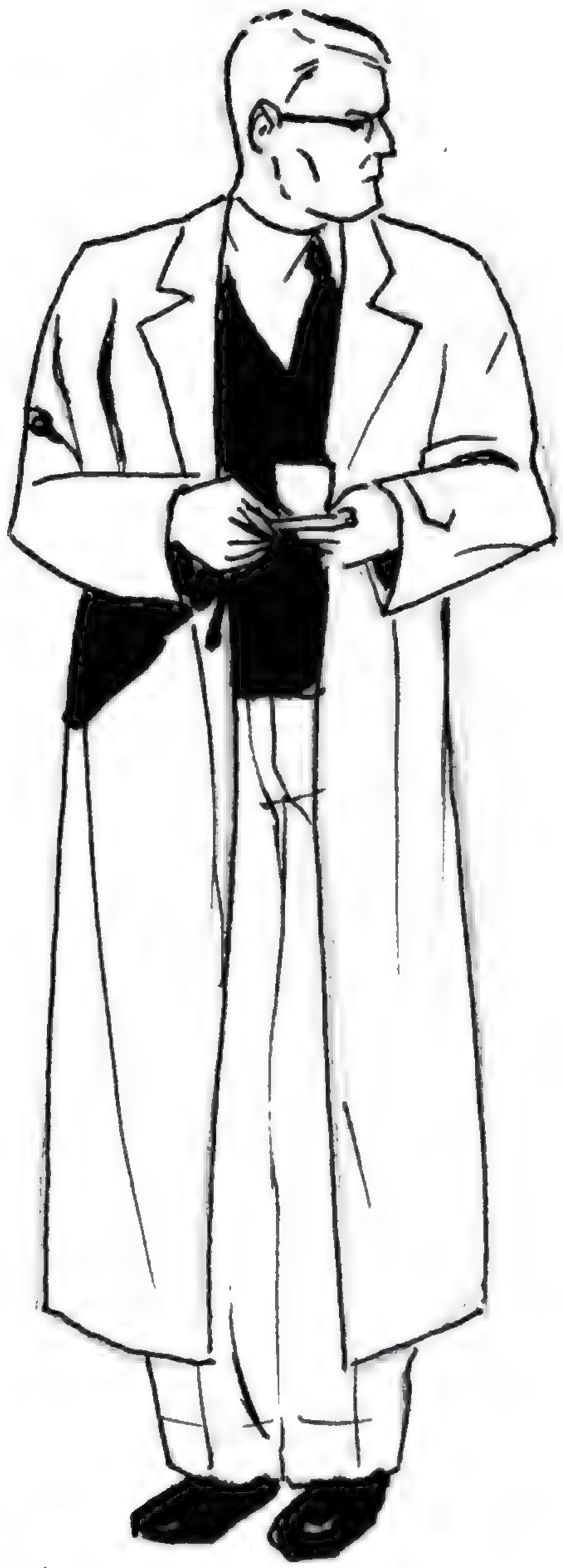
Batgirl Secret Files Pinup

Pencils: Marcos Martin
Inks: Alvaro Lopez
Color: Tom McCraw

Batgirl

Firefly

Moth's thugs



Detective Gordon

Wildcat

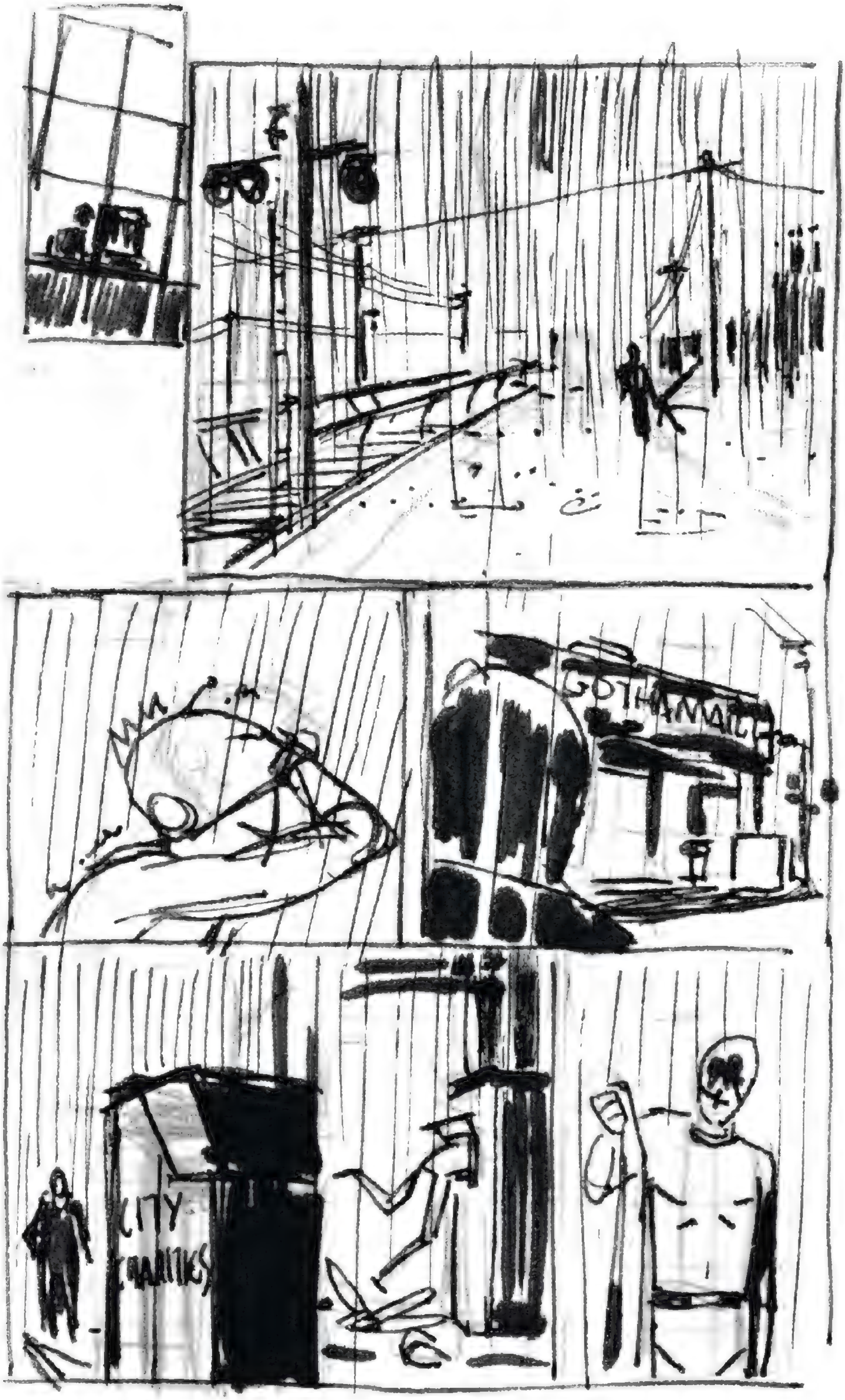
Issue #1 cover

Issues #2, 3 & 5 covers

Page 69 process

TUNA
TUNA

"SHE HAS HER OWN AGENDA."



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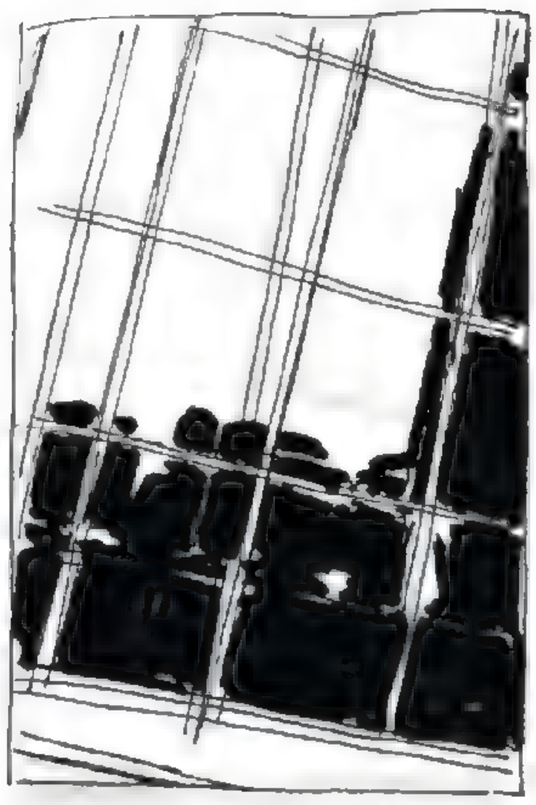

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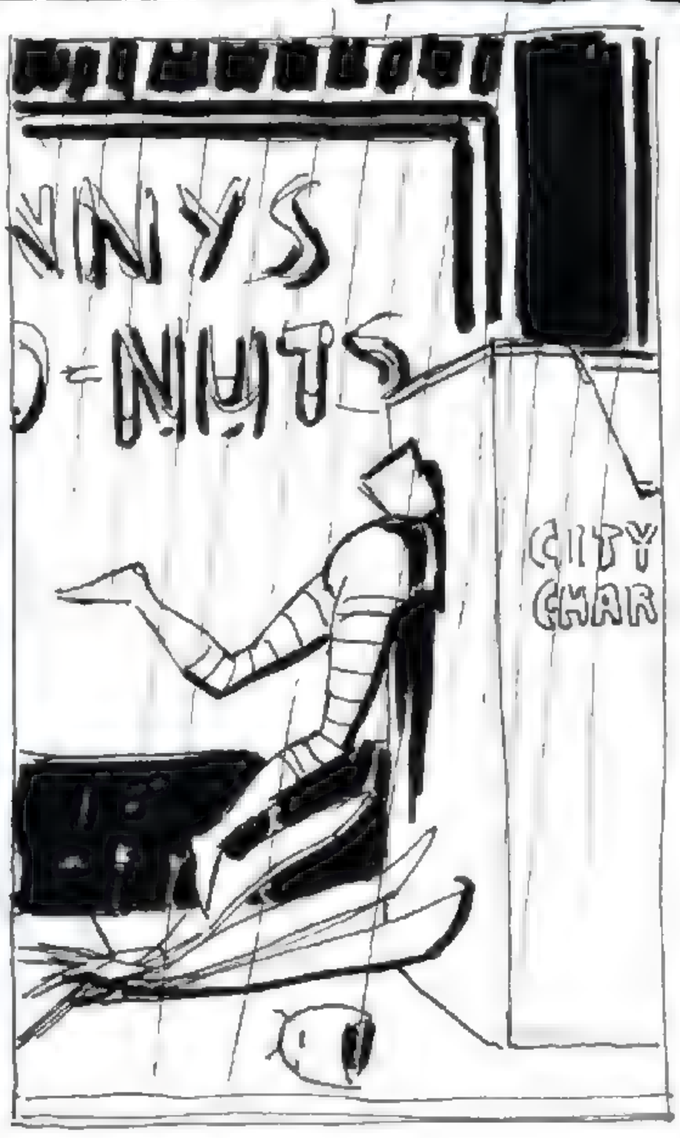
LENNYS
DONUTS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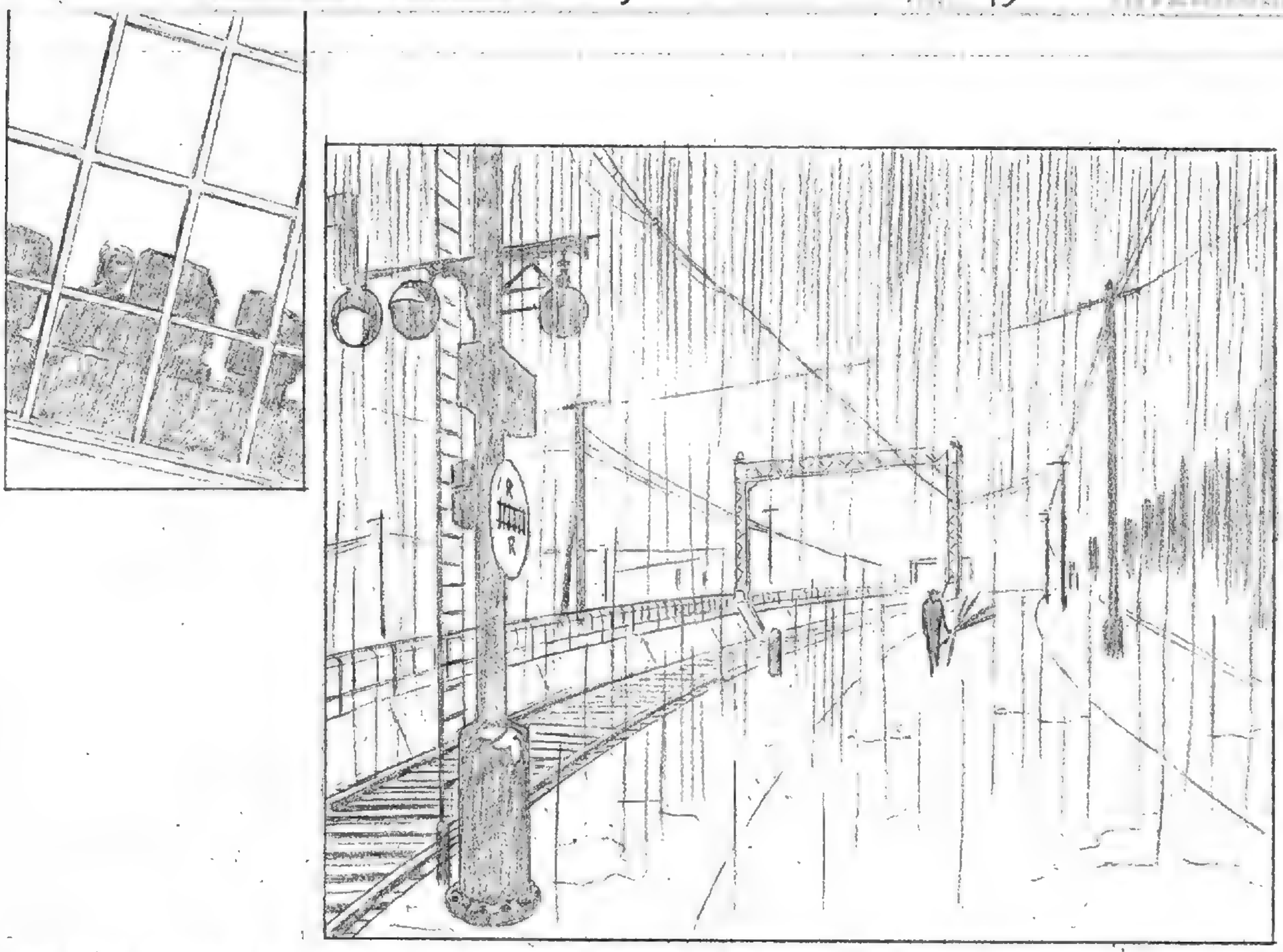
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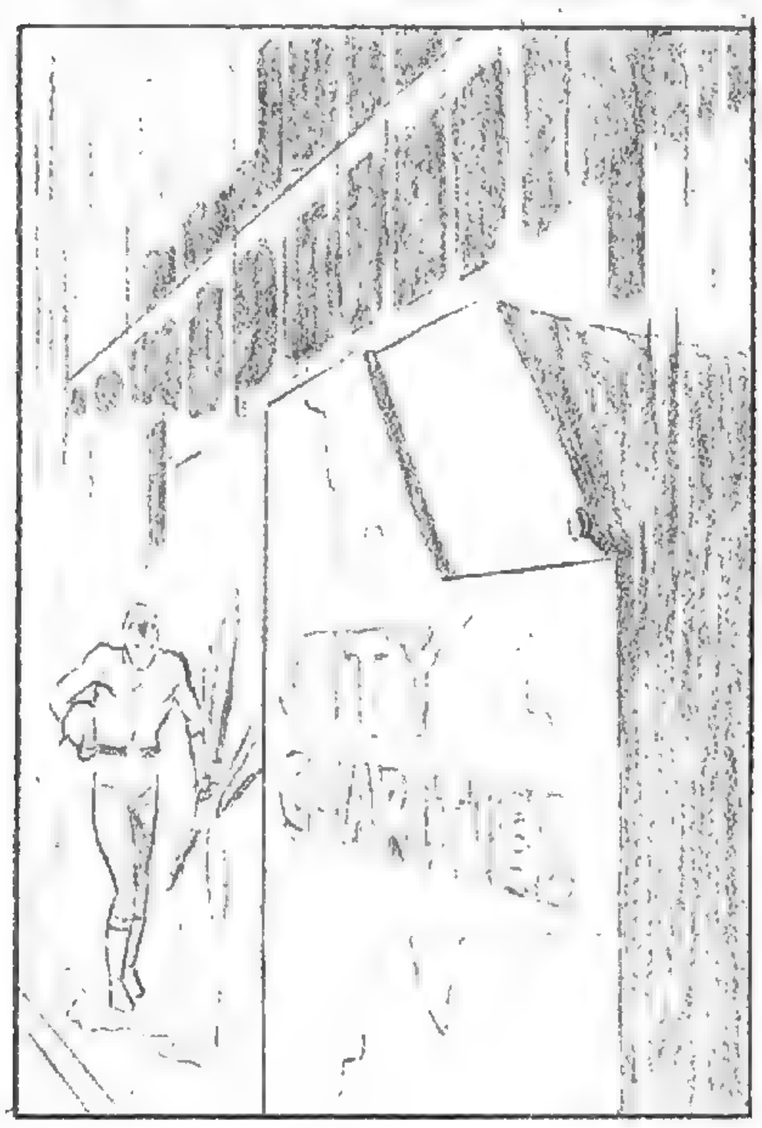
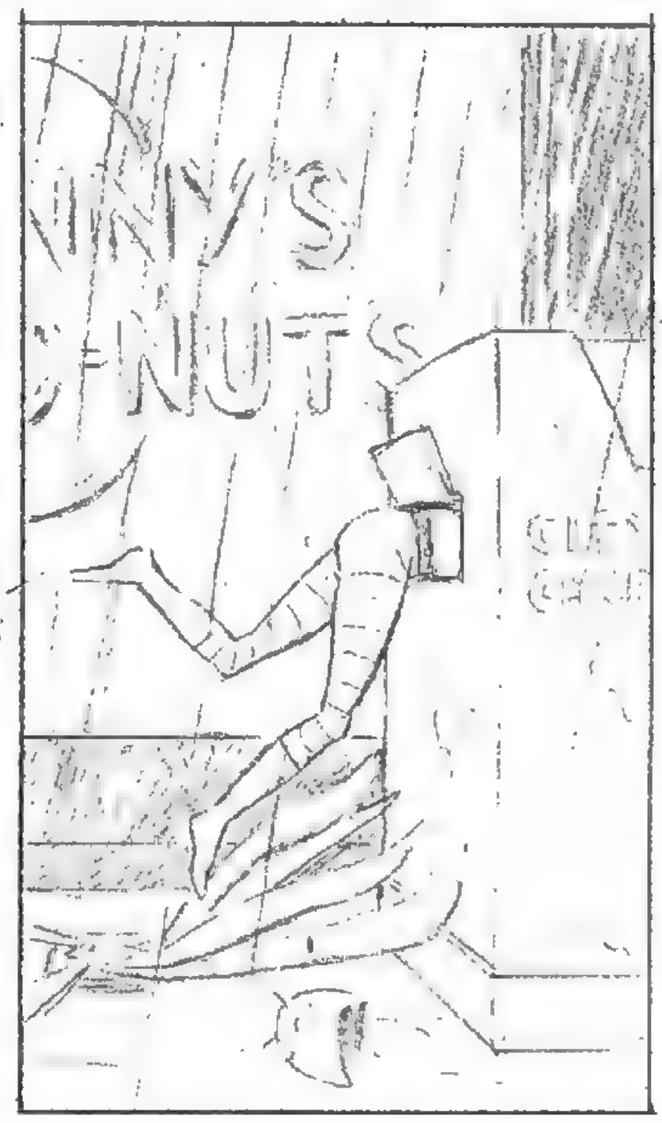
THRIFTMART
LENNY'S
DONUTS




NY'S
NUTS

SO I'M ALONE. BIG DEAL.

THE MOTH NEEDS NO ONE.
UNDAUNTED. UNAFRAID.

BUT I HAVE TO GET OFF THE STREET.
LENNY'S DO-NUTS

GAH.
CITY CHARITIES
THE GREAT KILLER MOTH.

GUARDIAN OF GOTHAM'S--
:uff:
--UNDERWORLD.
D-NUTS
CITY CHAR

STEALING FROM A CHARITY BOX.

GOTHAM'S NEWEST BATLING

As the Dynamic Duo of Batman and Robin swoop across the skyline of Gotham City, another masked avenger suddenly appears. Untested but stubbornly resilient, Batgirl doesn't take orders from the Dark Knight, the Boy Wonder, GCPD detective James Gordon or anyone else. She's a crime-fighting vigilante who's determined to make a name for herself—one way or another.

Told with timeless panache and wit by writers SCOTT BEATTY and CHUCK DIXON (ROBIN: YEAR ONE) and illustrated by the dynamic duo of MARCOS MARTIN (*Daredevil, The Private Eye*) and ALVARO LOPEZ (CATWOMAN), BATGIRL: YEAR ONE THE DELUXE EDITION chronicles the early days of Batgirl as she slowly shapes her legacy. Collects BATGIRL: YEAR ONE #1-9 as well as extensive character and cover sketches from Martin.

dccomics.com

SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN... THIS MONSTER!"